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New Statesman

THE LAST 'GOOD WAR'

Anthony Barnett asks what were they fighting for

PLUS: Martha Gellhorn on Nicaragua • Classroom revolt • Equity dispute • Books • Arts

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New Statesman

Cover photo: Camera Press

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New Statesman

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From VE Day to Star Wars

ANNIVERSARIES are, of course, only a function of the decimal system. So it is strange that quite so much energy and emotion is going into the 40th anniversary of VE Day. It must be that many of those in high places today feel instinctively that they will not be in the mood or condition to celebrate the full half century in 1995. By then countries will be run almost entirely by people whose adult experience is post-1945. In short, VE Day is in the process of passing into history.

The welter of prose and rhetoric about the aims and results of World War II has been predictably confused. President Reagan clearly has been confused throughout, and not just over the bungled and undignified farce of his visit to Bitburg cemetary.

Was 1945 a victory of the allies over fascism? In which case in a spirit of reconciliation it ought to be entirely appropriate for Americans and Germans to celebrate together after 40 years the fact that there is today no Thousand Year Reich. The problem, though, (which Anthony Barnett explores on page 8) is that the core reality of World War II, both in Europe and in the Pacific, was something different.

In Europe, the campaigns in the West (even more the campaigns in the Mediterranean and North Africa) were sideshows — dreadful sideshows of course to those involved, but sideshows none the less. The battle that ultimately counted was the battle between fascism and the Soviet Union. The war in Europe was won and lost on the eastern front. It was a war between Nazism and Communism.

The Cold War was its immediate and linear successor. For cold warriors from John Foster Dulles through to Ronald Reagan and their British echoes it has been impossible uninhibitedly to celebrate the Russian-American-British-Allied victory over Germany forty years ago. The Soviet Union and the Soviet system were the enemy from 1917 to 1940. They have, for these people, again been the enemy since 1946.

The reality is that, if in some impossible way Nazi Germany had held out the prospect that its expansionist ambitions were entirely towards the east, that it could 'take out' the Stalin regime and restore some version of capitalism in Russia and that it would leave Europe west of the Rhine, north of the Elbe and South of the Alps in peace, then the appeasers would have remained the political heroes for the Right that they were at the time. Most of the British establishment, after all, remained remarkably open minded and much of it positively enthusiastic about Nazism and its 'anti-Bolshevik' drive right up to 1939.

Equally, in the Pacific the battle was not about the defence of democracies, for apart from Australia and New Zealand which did not come under direct attack, there were none there to defend. The battle there was imperial. The result, when the war was over, was that British, French and other European empires were fatally weakened. And the Americans had established the base for the neo-imperial position that they hold in the region today. It was and has remained hemispheric power politics. Concern for democracy never came into it, except as rhetoric for US domestic consumption and in order to keep the required funds coming out of the Congress.

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FOR THE LAST forty years, then, Western Europe has accepted American political and military hegemony. For most of that time most West Europeans have been reasonably happy with that situation. At times — West Berliners during the airlift, for example — they have been positively grateful. There have certainly been waves of anti-Americanism; unilateralist and peace movements have waxed and waned. But in general a European defence and political system, with the United States taking an overwhelmingly dominant role through NATO, has broadly seemed to be the natural and desirable order of things to most European voters and governments, even governments of the Left.

It is ironic, then, that the 40th anniversary of VE day should coincide with the moment when this is no longr true. President Reagan's unique contribution has been to create a situation where even politicians of the Right — Thatcher here, Kohl in West Germany — are increasingly angered and frightened by the practices and perceptions of contemporary American neo-imperialism.

The watershed, of course, has been Star Wars. The fact that without consultation or warning President Reagan could launch an idea with such vast political, military and industrial ramifications was shaking enough to the Alliance. In the months that have passed, though, it has got worse. It is clear that the Star Wars project has been under way for some time and that the military-industrial momentum behind it now makes it virtually unstopable.

The crude way in which the Administration — particularly Defense Secretary Weinberger — has sought to mute criticism by touting associated research contracts and offers to buy military hardware round the world has given Western governments a clear feeling of being treated as cheap. The way in which the justification for Star Wars has been stood on its head since the President first spoke of it in public has equally been an indication of United States indifference to even friendly allied opinion. The original notion was that Star Wars offered the hope of guaranteeing the world against (Soviet) nuclear attack and it was even suggested that, once achieved, such a technological insurance system might be shared with the Soviet Union itself.

Once, though, this 'dream' that the world could be made safe for all time from nuclear attack was shown to be inherently absurd, the entire justification for the project was switched. Now we were told that the Soviet Union had already invested massive resources in research in this field, that there was a 'Star Wars gap' with the US trailing behind the Russians and that a massive programme to catch up was required in order to restore American national security.

For most on the Left these developments have only served to confirm all the other evidence that American foreign and defence policy is dangerously unstable. For the Right the political and presentational problem is more difficult, because the language and psychological attitude of acceptance of American leadership are much harder to change.

But there is a corresponding difficulty for the Left. The natural and logical reaction to a realisation that Europe dare not any longer accept unquestioned American dominance is to seek to change political and military institutions through which US dominance is maintained — above all NATO. Labour, for instance, is already committed to a policy of unilateralism, which is not exactly compatible with what were previously regarded as the norms of NATO membership.

But once the genie of fundamental reform of European membership of NATO is out of the bottle, we should be entering a political and military world that we have not experienced for these last 40 years. It is only too easy to picture European political and military developments in such a new situation that could be every bit as dangerous and unattractive as the status quo. Europe, after all, does not have a track record of which it can be proud in these matters over the past 100 years. Valid criticism of the United States is one thing. A headlong rush into some unknown is another. □

Happy holidays

MOST OF US have come by one route or another to the pragmatic conclusion that however anachronistic and inappropriate they may be, the fuss and political effort involved in abolishing the monarchy or disestablishing the Church of England makes it not worth talking about.

But then things happen like the private visit of Prince Charles and Princess Di to Italy. If our Royal Family really means to try to be the very model of a modern democratic monarchy, they don't seem to be trying very hard. Clearly the Queen, like any constitutional Head of State has to lead an artificial, isolated and rather boring life. But why cannot the rest of the tribe behave like ordinary people, get jobs, earn their living, ride bicycles?

Those few other surviving royal families elsewhere in Europe seem to manage it. They don't deliberately court international star treatment by swanning off with their wives, complete with hundreds of thousands of pounds of expensive dresses to stay with minor Italian aristos.

And should they want to have breakfast with the Pope, though they probably wouldn't, they don't have to clear it with their mother, who doesn't have to consult other church leaders before saying 'No'.

Britain is now a multiracial, multicultural and multifaith society. And supposed to be a democratic one. The way in which the Royal Family and the head of the Church of England are behaving would not encourage outsiders to believe so. □

Paul
ROBESON
FILM TRIBUTE

SUNDAY 5th MAY, 1985 – QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL, SOUTH BANK, SE1

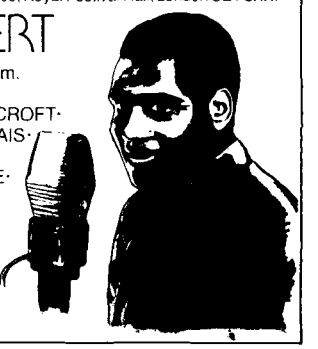
3.00 **THE PROUD VALLEY** (PG/1940). In this inspiring drama, Paul Robeson plays a stoker who is befriended by a mining community in South Wales in the 1930s. He said this was "the one film I could be proud of having played in."
THIS FILM IS MADE AVAILABLE BY KIND PERMISSION OF COLUMBIA-EMI-WARNER.
£2.00 (£1.00 for school children, students, senior citizens and unemployed)

4.30 **LECTURE ON PAUL ROBESON**. After the screening of **The Proud Valley** there will be a lecture in the Queen Elizabeth Hall on **Paul Robeson, Film and Politics**, given by John Akomfrah from the Black Audio Film Collective. (Admission free, no pre-booking.)

7.00 **JERICHO** (U/1937) and **SONG OF FREEDOM** (U/1936). In the adventure-drama **Jericho**, Paul Robeson plays one of the first Black heroes on the screen, a soldier under sentence of death who escapes from wartime France to North Africa. In **Song of Freedom** he stars as a London-born docker who goes in search of his African heritage. Elisabeth Welch co-stars.
THESE FILMS ARE MADE AVAILABLE BY KIND PERMISSION OF RAYMOND ROHAUER.
£2.00 (£1.30 for school children, students, senior citizens and unemployed.)

Tickets available from Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank, Belvedere Road, SE1 – 928 3191 (Credit Card Hotline 928 8800) or by post from Box Office, Royal Festival Hall, London SE1 8XX.

MEMORIAL CONCERT
at The Queen Elizabeth Hall, May 6th at 7pm.
(Appearing in alphabetical order)
AFRICAN DAWN · DAME PEGGY ASHCROFT · JOE MARCELL · COR MEIBION MORLAIS · J. D. DOUGLAS · MARTHA EDWARDS · ELISABETH WELCH · WILLARD WHITE · LEO WRINGER
Tickets £2.50, £4.00, £5.00, £6.00 & £8.00



LONDON AGAINST RACISM GLC

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KILLING TRADE WITH CHILE THRIVES

BRITISH COMPANIES are continuing to sell arms which could be used for internal repression and nuclear equipment to Chile, despite the introduction of a brutal 'State of siege' nearly six months ago by dictator General Augusto Pinochet. According to British government documents, handed to the *New Statesman* earlier this week by a Ministry of Defence source, two British companies are now actively trying to win Chilean contracts, reports DUNCAN CAMPBELL

Centaur military vehicle: Pinochet wants to buy 300 for his army

ONE CONTRACT is for the refurbishment of a nuclear reactor, and the other, quite separate contract is for the supply of up to 300 armed vehicles for the Chilean army. The Department of Trade and Industry, the documents show, issued an export licence last year for a demonstration model of the gun-carrying half-track vehicle, called Centaur, for Chile. The DTI admitted this week that this was issued in January 1984.

The other contract being pursued is for Fairey Engineering of Stockport, Cheshire to refurbish and reconstruct an experimental nuclear reactor at Lo Aguirre, near Santiago. The company's sales executive, Brian Lenaghan, was pursuing this contract in Santiago on Monday this week. He aknowledged he was involved in financial negotiations with the Chilean regime.

The DTI and the Ministry of Defence generally refuse to answer press or even parliamentary questions about such sales, aware that dramatically increasing repression of human rights in Chile is likely to make arms or nuclear sales controversial in Britain or Europe.

The Centaur contract is only part of a big recent effort by the Ministry of Defence's arms sales subsidiary, the Defence Sales Organisation (DSO), to sell arms to Chile. According to a recent classified summary of DSO's efforts, which we have obtained, the MOD in concert with UK manufacturers has in the last years got the Chilean military to express interest in Rapier, Swingfire, Sea Wolf, Blowpipe and Seacat missiles; Harrier, Jaguar and Hawk aircraft; Lynx helicopters; the Centaur armed vehicles; and one frigate, and five other Royal Navy ships, most of which are not in fact for sale. But most of these projects have foundered because of the recent rapid deterioration of the already battered Chilean economy.

Fairey Engineering was given official permission over six months ago to tender for the Chilean nuclear reactor 'refurbishment' contract. Fairey's attempts follow more ambitious efforts by the British nuclear construction industry — in particular the National Nuclear Corporation — to sell Chile one or more Magnox type nuclear reactors (*NS* 18 February 1983).

The head of the Chilean nuclear programme, Lieutenant General Herman Brady, came with his deputy to Britain on a government-sponsored 'trade promotion visit' in September 1982. A few months later, Brady defined the purpose of the Chilean nuclear programme to be to 'achieve the technical capacity....to solve any problem related to nuclear activity in the world'. And, although described as a civil reactor, the Lo Aguirre complex is entirely under military direction. In September 1982, in return for secret Chilean military assistance to Britain during the Falklands war, the government agreed to allow the supply of enriched uranium fuel rods to Chile for the Lo Aguirre reactor.

'State of siege'

The Centaur half-track vehicle, which with official British permission is already in Chile on demonstration to the Chilean army, is a lightly armoured gun carrier described by its makers as suitable for a wide range of internal security activity. In a brochure issued to a Chilean delegation at a recent arms show, manufacturers Laird (Anglesey) Ltd boasted that Centaur had 'outstanding potential in both fighting and support roles ... speeds up to 100 kph and a choice of weapons systems, bodies, equipment fits, cargo personnel... result in a versatility unequalled by any other current vehicle design'. Laird (Anglesey) Ltd is a subsidiary of the Laird Engineering group. A group spokesman refused to comment on whether the proposed Centaur deal would now go ahead.

Pinochet first declared the 'state of siege', which allows him unlimited powers of detention and control over public meetings or information, on 6 November 1984, and renewed it in February this year. Since the declaration, there has been a marked increase in murders of trade unionists, human rights activists and others who in the last three years had become increasingly vociferous in their opposition to the regime. ●

Research by Patrick Forbes

Top secret *Belgrano* report for MPs?

BRITISH INTELLIGENCE services did not pass on to the Ministry of Defence information about a vital signal recalling the Argentine cruiser, the *General Belgrano*, shortly before it was sunk, members of the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee have discovered.

But they have not yet been told about the top secret report on the mystery signal by Sir Brian Tovey, Director of GCHQ Cheltenham — Britain's codebreaking headquarters. The Tovey report reveals whether or not analysts succeeded in breaking the code of this vital message and reported its contents to Whitehall.

The missing signal may be the most critical document of the entire Falklands war. Copies may exist in the few departments authorised to see Cheltenham's output of 'sigint' (signals intelligence). MPs would then find that, contrary to the government's repeated allegations of the *Belgrano*'s — and Argentine Navy's — belligerent intent, there was complete evidence available to the government, before the order was given to sink it, that the *Belgrano* and the rest of the Argentine fleet were safely on a course for home.

News about the missing signal has been one of Whitehall's most closely guarded secrets. During 1983 intelligence officials feared — because of parliamentary questions asked by Tam Dalyell MP — that the news had got out. A special report about the signal was then prepared by Sir Brian Tovey for the personal attention of Cabinet Secretary Sir Robert Armstrong.

Not even Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine has been shown the Tovey report, despite the enquiry he mounted last year into the circumstances of the *Belgrano* sinking. During the Falklands war, he was not a member of the 'war cabinet' and may have been held not to have the 'need to know'. The official version given by GCHQ to Heseltine states that the recall signal from Argentine naval headquarters to the *Belgrano* has *never* been decoded, even to this day. This would be unusual, since GCHQ's huge computers could usually achieve a 'break' against Argentine naval codes in a matter of hours.

Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee closely questioned Ministry of Defence officials about the missing signal last month when they were shown the once top secret report, known as the 'Crown Jewels', prepared by former senior official Clive Ponting. In the covering minute attached to the now widely circulated Crown Jewels — which the MPs as well as trial lawyers and the jury have seen — Ponting wrote that an unsuccessful search had been conducted in the MoD to see if the missing signal had in fact been located, and if Britain had had information about the recall signal to the *Belgrano*. This information about the Crown Jewels was leaked last week to a literary magazine, *Granta*, which also published a number of hitherto secret details from Ponting's report. But the truth of Ponting's report must depend on whether or not he, like Michael Heseltine, was told the truth about the missing signal in the first place.

Duncan Campbell with Patrick Forbes

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Andrea Nicola

VASSILIS and Katerina Nicola, the Cypriot couple seeking sanctuary from deportation have now spent two months in St Mary's church, Eversholt Street, London. The idea of seeking sanctuary in a church comes from the play The Appellants, *which is based on a similar situation. The group Theatro Technis, which performed the play two years ago, approached Father Phillip Dyson with a view to putting the imaginary situation into practice. St Mary's is an Anglican church — the Greek Orthodox church in London turned down the idea because it wanted to avoid conflict with the Home Office. Now there are plans to repeat the tactic in other churches.*

Criton Tomazos

Alliance splits over Dounreay

CONTROVERSY over plans for a new European fast reactor reprocessing plant at Dounreay on the north coast of Scotland (*NS* 22 February) has highlighted divisions between the Liberals and the Social Democratic Party over policy on nuclear power. Jim Wallace, the Liberal MP for Orkney, has annoyed his neighbour Robert McLellan, SDP MP for Caithness and Sutherland, by tabling an early day motion in the House of Commons critical of the plans.

The motion notes the 'growing concern' of the islanders and the 'potential threat' to fishing and tourism that any increase in radioactive discharges into the Pentland Firth would pose. It asks for an assurance that no final decision will be taken on siting a new reprocessing plant at Dounreay without a 'full Public Inquiry'.

McLellan, whose constituency is economically hooked on Dounreay, told the *New Statesman* that he thought the motion 'premature' and would not be signing it. He questioned whether there would be any increase in radioactive discharges and said that he was 'genuinely open-minded' as to whether there ought to be a public inquiry or not. But he denied that there was any split in the Alliance over the issue.

The Alliance has always found it difficult to reconcile the nuclear critics in the Liberal Party with the nuclear enthusiasts in the SDP. As a result its formal policy since the 1983 general election has been contorted, favouring the fast reactor in preference to the American-style pressurised water reactor (PWR) planned for Sizewell in Suffolk. The idea — in the words of McLellan's personal assistant Simon Coates — that the fast reactor is somehow 'safer and cheaper' than the PWR is one that few responsible nuclear analysts could take seriously.

Rob Edwards

Unions mock ethnic monitoring

ETHNIC MONITORING of the workforce of one London borough is running into severe difficulties because of strong opposition from manual workers' trade unions.

In October 1984 Southwark Council voted to introduce ethnic monitoring — a practice supported by bodies like the Commission for Racial Equality — and produced an implementation paper which was put to the manual trade unions, NUPE and GMABTU. But they rejected it: the manual workers' staff side resolved that 'this is a totally futile exercise and serves no one's interest'.

Instead the unions have presented council management with an alternative questionnaire, a copy of which has been passed to the New Statesman. *The document is clearly intended to ridicule ethnic monitoring, with questions like: 'If American Indian, please state your tribe: Apache/Black Foot/Cheyenne/ Sioux'; 'Are you of mixed race: Father black, Mother white/ Mother black, Father white/ Father brown, Mother white/ Mother brown, Father white/'; and 'Who do you think works on your behalf without pay: Race advisors/Women's Quality Unit/ Management/Your shop steward?'*

Despite the clearly racist nature of the questionnaire the council has confirmed to the New Statesman *that it intends to use it as a basis for negotiation — a decision viewed with alarm in some quarters.*

Jolyon Jenkins

MISCELLANY

Rare first edition

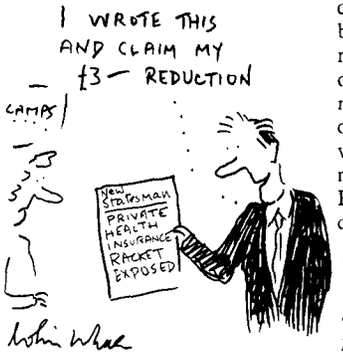
Interesting piece in the first edition of last week's *Sunday Times*. Local government correspondent Anne Jacobs reported that 'housebuilders believe that the abolition of rent controls is unlikely to provide the boost to the private rented sector sought by the government.' But, she said, 'there is little doubt that rents would soar if controls were abolished.' Which would increase public expenditure. 'Housing benefit paid to people on low incomes would rise substantially.' Somehow the piece managed to slip past eagle-eyed Andrew 'Two Chauffeurs' Neil — but once he spotted it he moved swiftly and the piece was missing from later editions of the paper. Don't you realise, Ms Jacobs, that abolition of rent controls is *government policy?*

PM v *NS*

'Is it true that your ambitions extend beyond being prime minister?' a caller from the USA asked Mrs Thatcher on Sunday's It's Your World *(Radio 4 and World Service), where she was holding court. The PM was mystified: where had the caller come across the claim? 'In the* New Statesman*', he said. 'That explains it. I do occasionally read the* New Statesman*, but when it says something about me I don't', was Mrs T's contemptuous if confusing reply. Incidentally, have we really ever made such an allegation?*

Cracking the Code

There's an article in the NUJ's code of conduct — to which we of course refer constantly at the *NS* — which reads: 'A journalist shall not accept bribes nor shall he/she allow other inducements to influence the



performance of his/her professional duties.' We mention this because of the delivery to this office of a press release from the L.A.M.P.S. National Physiotherapy Service which tells us about their great new private health insurance programme. In a covering letter, Marketing Assistant Lynn Patience says that the company 'is prepared to offer a £3.00 reduction to journalists who publish details of the scheme.' Sorry Lynn — on no account do we intend to mention it.

The doctor vacillates

Polly Toynbee, one of the leading lights in the Guardian*'s SDP club, has joined the opponents of the Powell Unborn Children (Protection) Bill (applause). But another notable SDPer is maintaining the party's record for fence-sitting. David Owen did honour Toynbee with a guest appearance on the platform of the Lobby for the Childless — to argue against the Bill — last Wednesday; but somehow he didn't quite manage to cast a vote against it at its second reading.*

Camel enters needle

Further to *NS* Politics of Envy Unit probe into BP chairman's salary, share options and pension (12 April), we feel it's only fair to give Sir Peter Walters' side of the story. He's spoken on a number of occasions on 'The Morality of Creating Wealth', most recently at St Lawrence Jewry in the City on 28 November 1984. For Sir Peter is a Christian, and a more committed one than many heads of multinationals. Let's start with the facts. One: Sir Peter's salary last year £241,547 (pay rise 32 per cent), pension contributions paid by BP approx £180,000, share options potentially worth £40,812. Two: Matthew 19.24: 'It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.' Off you go, Sir Peter: 'I'm not saying, of course, that free enterprise is perfect. Nothing in a fallen world is perfect . . . [But] I do not accept for one minute that it is only through selfishness, ambition and greed that free enterprise works . . . It is often said — and I agree — that the market is neutral. It provides the consumer with what he' [sic] 'asks for. So to damn the market for selfishness can be likened to the fat man in a restaurant who blames his own obesity on the waiter.' Sir Peter only mentions his own pay and conditions once: 'What is certain is that without wealth, there can be no new hospitals, no help for those in need — and no Rolls Royce for the company chairman (I have a Ford by the way).'

Our own trumpet

You never really get used to it. Sunday's Observer *story about Shell's pretence that they've made a gas plant disappear strongly resembled an* NS *item five weeks ago. The story beneath — about the PM's efforts to erect a 'glass stump' by St Pauls was also previewed here last week. Then there was* Miscellany*'s report of Home Office queues being used to stem immigration (15.2.85) — c.f.* Guardian *front page exclusive 21.3.85. But most mortifying was when* This England *credited a Darlington councillor with 'We all sign on' as an anagram for Nigel Lawson. What would Ana say?*

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Peace Protests Roll Call (14)

Total arrested to date in UK and Eire: 6,966

Arrests to date by location

Menwith Hill, Yorkshire *(Figures included in last month's total)*
29.7.84 6 women arrested while walking inside the base. All taken to Harrogate Police Station, held overnight and brought before Ripon court in the afternoon of 30.6.84. The six were charged with 'Conduct likely to cause breach of the peace and criminal damage'. The police asked that the women be remanded in custody and their fingerprints taken. The magistrates refused and granted unconditional bail for the women to appear at Peteley Bridge Court on 31.8.84. At the final court hearing on 25-26.10.84. several charges were dropped leaving only one against Dee West for damage to a police station door. Dee conducted her own defence and was acquitted. Costs awarded to the women.

Tilshead Car Park, Nr. Salisbury Plain. **5**
25.4.85 5 Cruisewatch women arrested. Di MacDonald, Lynne Barlow, Missie, Amanda and Hazel set up a temporary peace camp in the Tilshead car park where Cruisewatch member often meet. They were surrounded by MOD police who set up metal posts and wire fencing and barricaded them in claiming that they were trespassing on MoD property. Two of the women charged with trespass and released on Thursday evening but Di, Hazel and Lynne were held overnight and were to appear at Devizes magistrates on 25.4.85.

Greenham Common USAF Base

Total arrested to February 28	**2,120**
Total arrested March/April	**147**
Total to date	**2,267**

March arrests **4**
15 women cut fence. 4 arrested. One woman rugby tackled by soldier hit her head on a concrete post. Released from hospital after x-ray.
3 women from Yellow Gate used a wash-house inside the base to do their washing. They were arrested and charged with 'theft of electricity'. **3**
Several Blue Gate women borrowed a US Landrover and drove about inside the base for more than an hour before giving themselves over the the MoD. Charged with 'Taking and Driving away'. This case is being heard at Crown Court. **6**
15 women from Green and Yellow Gates snipped through second security fence. A few made it to the third security fence and snipped it. Only one woman was arrested although two pairs of boltcutters were found. Police seem to be working on the assumption that she used one pair for each hand. All the women were put into a large police van and released after questioning one by one. Unnoticed those released were slipping back into the police van. It took the MoD police a very long time to notice that the numbers were not diminishing and eventually all were turfed out **1**

April arrests (to 25.4.85)
1.4.85. Mass trespass to test new by-laws. 55 women arrested. **55**
Eleven of these women held for four hours in an unheated and unlit van. Repeated requests were made for access to portakabin toilets nearby — but MoD guarding them made no effort to find a WPC to take the women to relieve themselves. One woman with a bladder complaint was seriously distressed. They only managed to persuade the MoD that their need were severe by smashing their way out of the thin balsa wood partition at the back of the van — they were incensed to do this when one of the MoD guards said: 'Why don't you do what the little boy did at the dyke?'
2-5.4.85. Ongoing trespass to test by-laws: estimated number 70. **70**
7.4.85. 8 women arrested by MoD. Released after being charged with alleged offences under the new by-laws. **8**
Francesca Loten of Clwyd, Llandrillo found not guilty and awarded costs after a 2½ hour hearing at Newbury Court on 1.4.85.
Chris Drake from Blue Gate jailed for 14 days after refusing to pay £60 at Newbury magistrates on 4.3.85. Chris had been dancing on a grass verge and told the court: 'I am not paying £60 for doing a conga down the side of a road and obstructing nothing.'
Three women, Rebecca Johnson, Sue Hornagold and Elizabeth Galst were on trial at Reading Crown Court at the beginning of April. The women had occupied an Air Traffic Control Tower in the base and had found papers marked 'CLASSIFIED' that related to biological and chemical weapons — some of these papers referred to 'Hot Guns'. Rebecca and Elizabeth refused to be bound over and were kept in custody overnight. Rebecca was subsequently jailed for one month and Elizabeth for 14 days. Sue Hornagold agreed to the bind-over, which was for three years and in the sum of £50.
On 15.4.85. Paula Williams was sentenced to jail for 7 days for non-payment of fines arising from a conviction at Greenham Common on 30.10.83.

London, BBC Television
10 women from Greenham met with London peace women and invaded BBC while the news was being transmitted. The BBC have refused to acknowledge that women were in the studio although photographs were taken to prove this. The chaos on the programme was explained as a 'technical hitch'. No charges made — and no press coverage.

Please send new information to ***Janey Hulme*** *at the* New Statesman.

Council results confirm Labour's recovery

LABOUR HAS regained a clear lead in council by-elections held since the Budget. Almost 100,000 votes cast in 38 three-cornered contests throughout Britain confirm the opinion polls in showing a marked Labour recovery.

Our results survey also finds the Conservatives in third place. This is not the first time they have lagged behind both Labour and the Alliance, but on both previous occasions their performance could be explained by the unusual pattern of seats contested.

This time the poor Tory showing is for real. They have lost two out of three seats they have defended since the budget, with the Liberals the main beneficiaries. (The scoreboard shows the April results, together with some March results omitted from our last survey.)

In the three-cornered contests the votes since 21 March have been distributed as follows:

Labour	**34,922**	**36.0%**
Liberal/SDP	**29,571**	**30.5%**
Conservative	**27,746**	**28.6%**
Others	**4,774**	**4.9%**

Altogether 52 by-elections have been held. The gains-and-losses are as follows:

	Seats defended	Seats lost	Seats gained	Seats held now
Con	23	16	2	9
Lab	15	2	5	19*
Lib	4	0	12	17*
SDP	1	0	2	3
Others	7	5	2	4

It is unlikely that the Alliance will do as well this Thursday in the shire county elections: Liberal and SDP candidates regularly perform better in by-elections than 'general' elections where power is at stake. Moreover, most of the shire counties are in traditionally Tory areas; so in any crude count of numbers voting, it is highly improbable that the Conservatives will lose first place.

Two of the areas *not* holding elections have provided further discomfort for the Tories. The latest opinion polls for Scotland and for Greater London suggest that in a general election held now the Tories would lose two-thirds of their MPs — including Mrs Thatcher.

In Scotland, the latest System Three poll gives Labour 45 per cent, the Alliance 21, the Conservatives 20 and the SNP 14. If there is a uniform swing throughout Scotland, the Conservatives would lose 14 of their 21 MPs. The nine per cent swing to Labour is, in fact, no greater than elsewhere in Britain; but Tory MPs are more vulnerable north of the border than in rural England.

In London the swing to Labour is much greater. Two Harris Research Centre polls during April — one for the GLC and one for *Thames News* — both report a 21 point lead for Labour. This is equivalent to a massive 18 per cent swing. On these figures the Conservatives would lose 38 of their 56 MPs in the capital. Possible victims include not only Mrs Thatcher in Finchley, but Rhodes Boyson in Brent North. Of the survivors, Mrs Thatcher is likely to be pleased about Norman Tebbit (Chingford), neutral about Patrick Jenkin (Wanstead and Woodford) and hopping mad about Edward Heath (Old Bexley and Sidcup).

When Harris asked how people would vote *in a GLC election* (which was due to be held this week until the election was scrapped), and the voting intentions logged of the 44 per cent who said they would be 'certain' to vote, Labour's lead increases to no less than 40 points.

On that basis, the Conservatives, with just 21 per cent support in the capital, would win only four out of 84 GLC seats, and Ken Livingstone would have a 70-seat majority at his beck and call; or not, as the case may be.

Peter Kellner

*Labour and Liberal totals include one seat each won on new boundaries.

Council scoreboard

21 March

NE Derbys DC	IND GAIN (Con)
Leominster DC	CON GAIN (Ind)
Knowsley DC	Lab hold

28 March

Tendring DC	LAB GAIN (Con)
Congelton DC	LIB GAIN (Lab)
NE Derbys DC	Con hold

11 April

N Kesteven DC	IND GAIN (Con)
Poole DC	Lib hold
Teignbridge DC	Con hold
Teignbridge	Ind hold

18 April

Brighton DC	LAB GAIN (Con)
Allerdale DC	LAB GAIN (Ind)
Cleethorpes DC	SDP GAIN (Con)
Liverpool City	LIB GAIN (Lab)
Liverpool City	Lab hold
West Yorks CC	Lab hold
Rotherham DC	Lab hold
Durham DC	Lib hold
Carmarthen DC	Ind hold

25 April

Blackburn DC	LIB GAIN (Con)
Perth & Kinross DC	LIB GAIN (Con)

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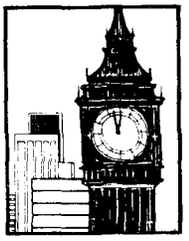

PETER KELLNER

Keeping mum about not keeping grandmum

ONE PART — not the greatest part, admittedly, but still a part — of the government's case for trying to persuade the House of Lords to endorse the abolition of the Greater London Council and the other metropolitan county councils is that the policy was spelt out in the Tories' 1983 manifesto; so ministers are merely doing what they promised.

But if Mrs Thatcher claims a mandate for wrecking large tracts of local government, she has no mandate for wrecking the state pensions system. Not only did the 1983 manifesto not mention the idea; leading Tories, when asked, confirmed their support for the plans laid by the last Labour government. Indeed, when Norman Fowler announced his social security review in November 1983, he told MPs:

> My aim in setting up an inquiry is not to call into question the fundamental pension structure that was established in the 1970s with all-party support, and to which I was a party.

Yet 'call into question' is precisely what Fowler's review has done and the cabinet this week is doing.

The stated argument for this turn-round is that recent population projections show an alarming increase in the number of old people during the 21st century — just as the new scheme reaches full blossom — but no corresponding increase in the number of working people to pay for it.

There is some truth in this, although as an argument for suddenly scrapping state earnings-related pensions, it does not add up. Until 1980 official population projections only looked forward 40 years. And the 1979 projection — anticipating what would happen until the year 2019 — foresaw no great horrors: the proportion of retired people in England and Wales would remain about 18 per cent of the total.

However, following the 1981 census, and in the light of new evidence that mortality rates were declining faster than expected (that is, people were living longer), new projections were made; and this time a 70 year projection was made — to 2051.

Suddenly the figures looked more worrying (except to people like me who can now expect to enjoy a longer life, and that's official). The number of retired men and women was expected to rise from 9 million in 1981 to 9.8 million in 2011, 10.7 million in 2021 and 12 million in 2031, before slipping back to 11.2 million in 2051. The number of people of working age is not expected to grow at anything like that rate.

So there is a good reason to be concerned about the long-term future cost of pensions. But there are three reasons why this concern does not justify the sudden abandonment of earnings-related state pensions.

The first derives from the sharpness of the change in the population projections. Fowler's own Social Security Advisory Committee made the point in its third report, published just five weeks ago:

> Comparison of the 1979-based and 1981-based population projections suggests that there can be considerable short-term fluctuations in the detail of projections, and particularly in the birth rate estimates and assumptions on mortality rates. We do not believe it would be justifiable to make pension scheme changes in anticipation of a demographic problem in 50 years' time.

The second reason for disputing the government's intentions is that the new projections were known well before the last general election. They were published in March 1983, two months before Mrs Thatcher dissolved Parliament. But long before that the projections were circulated among government departments, including Health and Social Security. The pensions implications were known by the winter of 1982/3. There is, then, no way in which Fowler may claim that changes are needed in the light of information that has only become available during the last few months. They were known in good time for the Tories to make plain their intentions during the election campaign. Instead they kept mum.

THE THIRD criticism of the government is that scaremongering about the changing age structure of the population is largely beside the point. The major cost problem with earnings-related pensions concerns the scheme itself, rather than the faster-than-expected increase in the number of old people.

This week the DHSS supplied me with these forecasts of the cost of state pensions (figures at 1984/5 prices):

	Basic pension costs £bn	Earnings-related costs £bn	Total costs £bn
1985	14.8	0.1	14.9
2005	16.9	5.0	21.9
2025	22.2	17.0	39.2

So over the next 40 years the real cost of state pensions is expected to rise by £24 billion; and almost three quarters of that increase will occur between 2005 and 2025.

It is, to be sure, a lot of money (£20 per worker per week) even though the costs of the earnings-related part do not begin to bite until after the turn of the century. What we are told is that the case for scrapping, or severaly curtailing, earnings-related state pensions is that they are financed on a pay-as-you-go basis, and it is wrong to burden our children and grandchildren with excessive costs of supporting us in old age.

Again, a specific truth conceals a wider deceit. Yes, state pensions are provided on a pay-as-you-go basis. That is, while we as individuals pay now for pension entitlements in the future, the overall system means that we pay today for today's old-age pensions, while future tax and national insurance contributions will pay for ours.

Oddly, it is the extension of that very point which undermines the government's case for stripping down pay-as-you-go state pensions and encouraging build-your-own-entitlement private pensions. For in the economy as a whole, *all* consumption by retired people is provided on a 'pay-as-you-go' basis by the workers of the day. Even if there were no state pension that would be the case: every meal, gallon of petrol and *Sunday Express* bought by the elderly would be physically supplied by people in work at the time the purchase is made.

If, therefore, a growing number of old people are to have an acceptable standard of living, it has to be in some form at the growing expense of current consumption by people in work. To throw out frightening figures about the potential cost of the state scheme misses the point. *Even if they are true*, either that cost must be met by those in work, or the standard of living of pensioners will be lower. Transferring the costs from the state to the private sector may be a good thing or a bad thing, depending on your point of view; but for any given standard of living for pensioners, privatising pensions will not affect by one penny the aggregate 'pay-as-you-go' costs for those in work in 2020 or 2030.

In any case, how big a burden will an extra £24 billion be in 2025? This year's gross domestic product, at 1984/85 prices, is likely to be about £335 billion. If we assume a modest 1.5 per cent a year average growth rate — which is less than the government says it can sustain more or less indefinitely — Britain's gross domestic product will be 81 per cent, or £273 billion, higher in 2025 than it is today. In other words, rather less than one tenth of the increase in output would be needed to finance better pensions for more people under the scheme the government is now attacking.

Even if the economy's average growth rate is only one per cent, the economy will still produce £164 billion more in real terms in 2025 than it does today. We may, as a nation, choose after a considered debate not to spend one seventh of that on extra pension payments; but hurriedly to cobble together a drastic change in policy on the basis that we cannot afford to do otherwise is both rotten politics and fraudulent economics. □

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WORLD WAR II: MYTHS & REALITIES

1939-45 was presented as the stand of the parliamentary democracies against the evil of fascism. Anthony Barnett argues that neither in Europe nor the Pacific was this true

> In late June and early July the views of all participants were shaken by Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union. Would Japan move north against Siberia as Hitler urged or south against Indochina and Indonesia, where the raw materials beckoned? On July 2 the Japanese Government called up a million men; on the 25th it announced a protectorate over Indochina.
>
> Dean Acheson
> later to be US Secretary of State

'DESPITE ALL the killing and destruction that accompanied it, the Second World war was a good war'. These are the words with which A.J.P. Taylor concluded his succinct and often brilliant account. Ten years later Studs Terkel used the same phrase as the title for his American oral history: *A Good War*. The cross-section of participants he interviewed still felt, after 40 years of bitter-sweet recollection, that the war was worth fighting. This feeling, of a justified war, is even stronger in Britain than the United States.

The 'moment' of 1945 has often been projected as one inspired by the prospects of a 'new world'. But all accounts suggest an atmosphere of relief rather than revolution. There was a powerful sense of agreement, across classes and countries, between soldier, partisan and civilian, British and American and Soviet, and remarkably so, between peoples and their leaders, the great statesmen of the time. Together they agreed about the worst. The worst was fascism and it had been conquered. The worst was also war itself. It was a profoundly civilian moment: a victory over militarism. Yet before the dust from a new worst — from Hiroshima and Nagasaki — had settled fighting began once more: not a third world war but a war for the Third World, in Asia especially, that continues to this day.

So what sort of judgment is it to say that it was a 'good war'? First, it is *comparative*: it contrasts World War II with conflicts that preceded it and have followed since. The First World War was bad: it entailed senseless slaughter on a hitherto unimaginable scale — for improper ends. We can debate both cause and relative merit, nonetheless the First World War was an inter-imperialist one that made a sour peace at Versailles.

If the Second World War demonstrated that appeasement did not ensure peace, the First showed that armed deterrence could fail at short notice. We live with the possibility of another such failure, a possibility that stretches into the future indefinitely, so much so that by any sober calculation the Third World War, one of complete destruction, is only a matter of time. Thus the Second World War stands out as the *last* 'good war'.

It was not only comparatively good, however. It was also an *absolute* good. Fascism did not pass. The full meaning of this definitive endorsement was in part retrospective, thanks to the publicised evidence of the holocaust.

Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin at Yalta: an unlikely alliance thrown together by the stupidity of fascism

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However dubious the ambitions of the allies may have been, Germany was qualitatively the *more* evil. This justified the elimination of the Nazi state and therefore the allied demand for 'unconditional surrender' which certainly prolonged the conflict. Morally speaking, the concentration camps and the centres of extermination provided a definitive justification to the righteousness of the victors.

Finally, the war paid off; it was 'worth it' for the Anglo-Saxon powers. This too was 'good'. At least it *felt* good to the British and it *was* good for the United States. The scale and rapidity of the gains made by the United States were unprecedented. America's war was short, three and a half years compared to Britain's five and a half; it was relatively painless, the US was not touched by direct attacks upon its continental territory; and it was very profitable, personal disposable income in the US rose from $95 billion in 1941 to $171 billion in 1945. America's gain in geopolitical terms was astonishing: complete supremacy in the Pacific, the dependency of Western Europe itself and control over much of the oil in the Middle East.

We can see immediately that the material 'goodness' of the Second World War was very much an Anglo-Saxon perspective. For the Soviet Union, on the other hand, it may have been a necessary but it was hardly a 'good' war. France was ashamed by its defeat. China was ripped apart as armies strove against each other for supremacy. Holland was occupied; so was Greece which was then thrown into a bitter civil war in the aftermath of its 'liberation'. Was it a 'good war' for Eastern Europe? Or for India? Nehru complained that the very statesmen whom he had warned against fascism now held aloft 'the banner of freedom, democracy and anti-fascism' — words he wrote in a British jail in 1944!

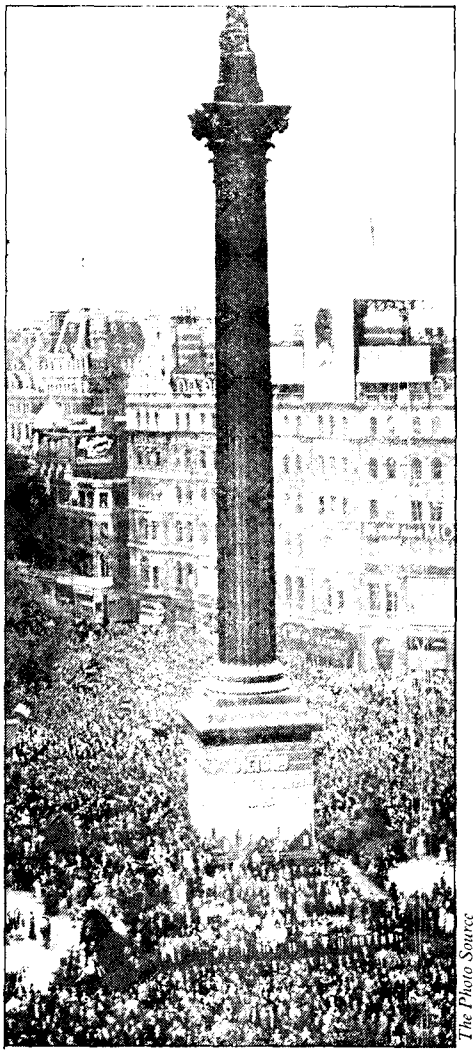
Just as the Free French sought, in de Gaulle's words, 'the restoration . . . of the complete territorial integrity of the French Empire', so Churchill, Nehru complained, was fighting a 'war of restoration and nothing more, of both the social structure of England and the imperial structures of her empire'. In his great speech to the House of Commons on becoming Prime Minister in May 1940, Churchill stated:

> We have before us an ordeal of the most grievous kind . . . to wage war against a monstrous tyranny, never surpassed in the dark, lamentable catalogue of human crime. That is our policy. You ask what is our aim? I can answer in one word: It is victory, victory at all costs, victory in spite of all the terror, victory, however long and hard the road may be; for without victory, there is no survival. Let that be realised; no survival for the British Empire, no survival for all that the British Empire has stood for, no survival for the urge and impulse of the ages, that mankind will move forward towards its goal.

Today few would justify the war with the words that Churchill chose in his peroration to urge Britons into battle. Nehru was right.

At the very least, then, it was an ambiguous victory. The British Empire won, yes, but where is it today? American democracy won, yes, and then established a worldwide machinery of covert operations and torture. Socialism won, yes, to grind its 'human face' under its own heel in Prague.

SO ON THIS fortieth anniversary of the 'good war' two things are needed. A re-affirmation of the joint victory over fascism that was gained in the course of those terrible years; and a cool assessment of the contradictory nature of the victory over fascism that was achieved and which forged the political world order we still live in today.



The Photo Source

VE Day 8 May 1945: end of the last 'good war'

Some questions then. Why did the victorious capitalist powers of 1918, who had together organised a war of intervention against the Soviet Union, now find themselves its ally? The main inter-imperialist rivalry of the century was between the two maritime powers, Britain and the United States. 'We discussed America almost as an enemy', a Foreign Office official noted in 1942. Yet these were the closest of allies. Indeed, why did the United Stated enter the war on Britain's side? To ask this, however, is to ask why Japan attacked the United States at the end of 1941. It had signed the so-called 'Anti-Comintern Pact' with Germany and Italy, so why *didn't* Tokyo strike northwards in co-ordination with Berlin rather than assault the United States? The conflict of 1914-18 was European, that of 1939-45 was the first global war, what linked the two 'theatres' of Europe and the East.

To begin to answer these questions we have to abandon any particular national viewpoint: none offers a decisive advantage in trying to view the war as a whole. In Asia, Japan had conquered Manchuria in 1931 (which gave it a long border with the Soviet Union) and had attacked China in 1937, where it attempted at great cost to impose its rule. The European empires and, especially, the United States, had their 'interests' and candidates in China and their own colonies in Southeast Asia (the Philippines was an American possession). Washington was well aware that it was engaged in a contest for strategic supremacy in Asia; one that had little to do with freedom and everything to do with strategic resources. The major war in the East, then, between Japan and the United States, *was* an inter-imperialist conflict, like the First World War.

This was not the case in Europe. Had it been so, Nazi Germany would also have 'struck south'. Indeed one section of the German command advocated a full-scale attack through the Mediterranean to the Suez Canal and the oil fields of Iran. There is little doubt that if, after the fall of France, Hitler had regarded the British Empire as his main enemy then he could have destroyed it. Instead, on 22 June 1941 German armies that totalled over three million assaulted the USSR. The blitz over Britain ended as German airpower went eastwards. The primary conflict in the West, therefore, was a war by a Fascism, long appeased by the parliamentary capitalist regimes: a *war against Communism.*

So the first thing to hold in mind is that in neither Europe nor the Pacific was the *major* struggle between 'the democracies and fascism', to use the catch phrase. In the East, where the main fighting was indeed between the capitalist democracies and fascist Japan, it was not a battle for democracy. Tokyo had overrun no neutral parliamentary societies such as Holland, Belgium, Norway or France. In the West, the democratic allies did finally take the war into the heartland of Europe in 1944, but the Russian front was decisive. Edward Thompson emphasised in *The Heavy Dancers* how:

> all of us now living, including those who were not yet born at the time of the battle of Stalingrad, live by virtue of a transfusion from that Soviet blood.

This is true for all of us *in Europe.* If Russia had broken in 1942 and Hitler had taken Moscow and the oil fields, there would have been no second front, no triumphant entry into Paris, no liberation of Belsen. The United States

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could doubtless afford a certain neutrality. When Germany attacked Russia, Truman, then a Senator for Missouri, argued:

> if we see that Germany is winning the war we ought to help Russia, and if Russia is winning we ought to help Germany, and in that way let them kill as many as possible . . .

Presumably, this hard-headed grasp of world realities helped win him selection as Vice-Presidential candidate on Roosevelt's 1944 ticket.

Truman's is hardly an attitude that would be reproduced today. The Soviet Union was qualitatively better than Nazi Germany — which is what the choice came down to in Europe. Similarly, the United States was to be preferred to Imperial Japan, which is what the choice came down to in Asia. And if the price that was paid for this double victory was the replacement of British by American hegemony of the oceans, then this, too, was an improvement in terms of democracy — if a slight one.

WHEN DID the Second World War begin? The powers involved can been regarded schematically as two rings around a centre. The centre was the Soviet Union with its vast interior land space. The two main axis powers — Germany, Japan — formed an inner ring, pressed up against the USSR, yet also autarkic and separated from each other. The outer ring consisted of the capitalist democracies: France, Britain, Holland, the United States and their far-flung empires, which retained economic contact along their exterior, sea-borne lines. There was intense economic competition within the 'outer-ring', yet mutual interests predominated over separate ones. Food and manufactured goods from the US were paid for with exports to America of tin, rubber and oil from the European possessions in Southeast Asia. It was here, indeed, at the colonial junction of the outer-ring, that the conflicts over Europe and China were fused into a single struggle.

The war did not begin when Hitler invaded Poland in September 1939 but rather in the East, in May that year, when the Japanese sent an army northwards across the Mongolian border, in a potential thrust against the Trans-Siberian Railway (they had already made a military probe that threatened Vladivostok directly). Certainly, the first full armoured clash between two major powers took place in the remotest region of the Central Asian steppes, at Kalkhin Gol. The dissident Soviet general Grigorenko tells in his memoirs how the Soviet command, incapacitated by Stalin's purge of its officers, bungled severely. In August and September, however, under Zhukov's brutal regime, Soviet armour and air-power encircled and destroyed the entire Japanese force of 18,000.

With the military blow came an equally stunning political setback for the Japanese. The Russian forces demonstrated the nature of full-scale mechanised warfare, but their German allies signed a pact with none other than . . . the Russians! Willmott, a British military historian, has argued, 'For the first time in years Japan found herself in a position of confusion and irresolution in the Autumn of 1939. The outbreak of war in Europe, indeed, gave Japan good reason to reconsider her whole position'.

Reconsider 'she' did, and watched developments in Europe. In January 1940 a German liaison officer flying to an unimportant meeting in Bonn was blown off course by winter weather. He landed in Belgium with the plans of the German attack on the West. It was an assault for which the Franco-British armies were already prepared and would almost certainly have been able to frustrate. But Hitler now switched his key assault to the Ardennes.

There, in May 1940, General Guderian raced through with his panzer divisions and crossed the Meuse, turned the flank of the Franco-British forces and encircled them. Doubtless such a catastrophic rout cannot be ascribed entirely to chance; to the political complacency of appeasement was added military conservatism. The result, France capitulated and changed sides; its Vichy regime collaborating with the Axis. Within the month, fascism reigned supreme across the entire land continent of Europe, from Warsaw to Lisbon.

The immediate consequence was felt in the Far East. The Japanese secured their interests with their new ally in French Indochina. Tokyo insisted that all supplies to the Chinese nationalists through Haiphong and what we would now call North Vietnam be stopped. In July 1940 the French Governor General of Indochina agreed to the stationing of Japanese troops in the North. This was a fateful move, which drew Japan effortlessly southwards. For although its initial aim was 'defensive', to protect its operations in China, the Japanese gained *de facto* suzerainty over the French 'balcony over the Pacific', a thousand mile balcony to the resources of Southeast Asia.

As Germany consolidated its gains, Japan strove to reach a settlement with America that would allow it to secure its position in China. In April 1941, returning from a visit to Berlin, the Japanese Foreign Minister signed a neutrality pact between his country and Russia. In May, Mao Tse-Tung denounced a possible plot: 'A compromise between Japan and the United States at the expense of China and the creation of an Eastern Munich . . .'. Washington, confident of its long-term superiority, saw no reason to buy such a deal. Within weeks Hitler struck against the USSR, apparently believing, as did many others, that it would be a short campaign; that if the might of France had gone down in a month, Russia, with its army command in tatters, could perhaps last six.

IN JAPAN the Imperial Conference of 2 July decided to await 'future developments' to settle 'the Soviet question' while seeing immediate advantage in moving south. With French agreement Japanese forces stationed themselves in Saigon. Washington responded by imposing a complete oil embargo on Japan, where there were reserves for only 18 months. This was the true *causus belli* in the Pacific. It obliged Japan either to come to an agreement with the US on America's terms or to go to war to capture the oil of the Dutch East Indies.

Thus as the *Wehrmacht* flooded across the Soviet border to initiate the major land conflict of the war, between the power of the 'inner ring' and the centre, the Japanese were drawn to the key colonial zone of the 'outer ring'. Before the Japanese hit Pearl Harbour in December 1941 some of their forces had crossed the Gulf of Thailand from French Indochina to land on Britain's Malay peninsula. *HMS Prince of Wales* — the pride of the Royal Navy — and the *Repulse* set out to intercept the landings: they were promptly sunk. Britain's role as a world naval power was ended, by aircraft that took off from Saigon's Tan Son Nhut Airport.

The sudden, partly accidental capitulation of France and its Asian colony together precipitated both the primary regional conflicts. The ease of Germany's victory in the West allowed and encouraged it to turn East against Russia. Simultaneously, Japan, already bloodied by the Soviet Union in the north, was presented with highly favourable circumstances for an advance southwards. The powers of the inner ring were sent in opposite directions, along the fault line of the Third Republic. As Germany was freed to move against the centre, Japan brushed aside the rest of Europe's Asian colonies. This double stroke, between June and December 1941, forged a world war. But as Hitler exulted in the dramatic news of Japan's audacious — but actually mismanaged — attack on Pearl Harbour, his own forces had ground to a halt in the Russian winter.

Thus the failure of Germany and Japan to combine their forces not only brought the two great powers of the present, the US and the USSR, into the conflict as allies. It also assured their contradictory ascendency today. The victorious alliance that resulted was made by accident rather than design: an alliance of European empires, broken in everything except their will; and the American colossus, set to establish a new world order in its own image; and Stalin's Russia, drained of blood and determined to protect its gains. The alliance was thrown together by the stupidity of fascism, militarism and racialism, to form the ironically termed United Nations. □

This article is based on research Anthony Barnett is doing for his book Pale Colossus: the world and Vietnam, *to be published by Chatto & Windus as a Chatto: Tigerstripe in 1986.*

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PUTTING THE BOOT IN THE BEEB

The Thatcherite Adam Smith Institute ran a seminar in London this week. Michael Leapman went along to find out what stage the mounting attack on the BBC has reached

THE DEBATE on the BBC's future has produced surprising bedfellows, soiling the sheets in unlikely beds. At a seminar organised by the right-wing Adam Smith Institute this week, independent TV producers with impeccable libertarian credentials snuggled up alongside advertising agents owning to less lofty motives, both bent on the destruction of the Beeb as we know it.

It is hard to arrive at a correct socialist line on this issue. On one side of the argument is the huge, overweening corporation, devoted to the preservation of the status quo, concerned more with avoiding offence to vested interests than with the encouragement of original creative work and the expression of radical ideas. Surely that has little claim on our sympathy?

Yet ranged against it are an even less attractive group, the massed forces of rapacious commerce, eager to rip the BBC apart with an eye to making useful profits on the components. If the likes of Rupert Murdoch favour something, shouldn't left-thinking people automatically be against it?

Even the government's attitude does not, on this occasion, help resolve the dilemma. Far from taking a firm stand that we can all dutifully oppose, they are doggedly straddling the fence, setting a licence fee as high as the BBC could reasonably have expected, while delaying any decision by establishing a commission on the funding of broadcasting whose members have still not been nominated and whose report is unlikely to appear before the autumn of 1986.

Certainly it was impossible to detect an opinion of any kind in the opening address to the seminar from Giles Shaw, the Home Office minister responsible for broadcasting: perhaps the greyest figure in a government that does not bristle with charisma. (The nearest he came to expressing a firm view was when he sighed, in an unscripted addition to his published text: 'How I do wish that everybody would pay the licence fee.')

Shaw reiterated the official line that the reason why BBC financing has to be examined is that 'in cash terms the fee has become so significant'. Others made the point that it was not a major burden to everyone, especially not to the hundred or so advertising and TV people at the seminar: they had, after all, paid £45 — just below the old licence fee — for the six hours of live entertainment the occasion provided.

Several speakers uttered the routine pieties about pensioners finding it hard to pay the fee, and it was in a way refreshing to hear an unashamedly savage view from the Adam Smith Institute's Peter Young, the man who organised the event. Not all the old, he pointed out, could legitimately claim relief. 'Many of us are going to be old-age pensioners, and we aren't all going to be poor.' We tittered. Certainly not.

THE ASSAULT on the BBC was spearheaded by two independent Channel 4 producers, David Graham of *Diverse Reports* and David Elstein of *A Week in Politics*. Graham accused the Corporation of being a gargantuan bureaucracy showing 'programmes that everyone is willing to watch, but nobody wants to watch very much.' He listed occasions when the Beeb had timidly allowed governments to influence its coverage, using the (not always) unspoken threat of sanctions when the licence fee came up for review again.

His solution was for the government to license nearly all the available TV channels (he estimates there may be up to ten) to commercial operators, who would fund them in any way they chose — through advertising, subscription or whatever — and be subject to minimal control. The revenue from the leases would finance the remaining channels, which alone would be subject to existing 'public service' obligations — balanced political reporting, services for minorities and perhaps the relay of government information.

NOW SHOWING ON YOUR SCREEN
CHARLES DICKENS'
BLEAK HOUSE
starring
DENHOLM ELLIOTT · DIANA RIGG
BBC 2 WEDNESDAYS AND SUNDAYS
SHORTLY TO BE SEEN IN AMERICA AND THE REST OF THE WORLD
BBC ENTERPRISES
SEE FULL DETAILS IN Radio Times
I have never seen anything so beautiful on television. Sunday Times
The cast is cream, the sets splendid. The Guardian
...a miracle of reconstruction. The Times
...splendid television. Financial Times
COMING SOON ON BBC TV
A SENSATIONAL PRODUCTION OF
F. SCOTT FITZGERALD'S
'TENDER IS THE NIGHT'

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Such deregulation would, he believed, result in 'an explosion of cultural productions': but I doubt it. Would a place be found in that system for *Diverse Reports* and similar laudable programmes, that comparatively few people want to watch but that the producers do want to *make* very much.

I have the same reservation about Elstein's plan for the BBC to be funded by subscription. He would have its programmes transmitted in a scrambled form, viewable only through a decoder leased from the Beeb for the equivalent of a licence fee. Those who did not want to pay the price could opt out and restrict their viewing to ITV. Yet I suspect the need to get the maximum takeup for subscriptions would inexorably drive the BBC down market.

John Perriss, deputy managing director of Saatchi and Saatchi, had little time for high-falutin' arguments about programme quality. His case for allowing ads on the BBC was based chiefly on statistics showing that it could make money for lots of people, plus the notorious poll that had 70 per cent of respondents declaring — unsurprisingly — that they would prefer the advertising option to a hefty increase in the licence fee.

Twice Perriss won the raucous plaudits of the assembled ad-men — a bit like braying back-benchers at Question Time in the Commons — by referring to the 'elite of broadcasters' who wanted to feed viewers uplifting fare that most of them found indigestible.

AND WHO WAS there to speak for the embattled Beeb? I spotted three members of the Corporation staff but none said a public word throughout the proceedings, preferring to soak up the punishment. The only BBC supporter among the platform speakers was Professor A.C.S. Ehrenberg of the London Business School, recently appointed as marketing adviser to the Director-General — a baffling role in a non-commercial corporation. He delivered a competent summary of the case for the existing arrangements and, in a revealing aside, provided a delicious caricature of the Beebish view of the world.

Like most of us, he observed, he had little time to watch TV. 'But our wives have to watch because we're doing other things all the time and can't take them out to the opera'. Sexism and elitism in a single sentence.

Otherwise it was left to Bill Stewart, another independent producer, to deliver a trenchant defence of the BBC from the floor; although his enthusiasm for quality programming was coloured by his admission of responsibility for producing *The Price is Right* and *Family Fortunes*.

A little mystery to end with. The list of participants in the seminar contained ten representatives of the accountants Deloitte Hoskins & Sells. They paid their £450 attendance fees in advance — and not one of them showed up.

Maybe they thought it was like a charity ball, where you buy tickets to support the cause, with no intention of attending. The purpose of these Adam Smith functions is to give a rightwards nudge to opinion on contentious issues; so I suppose that, when the time comes for decisions to be made on the financing of broadcasting, they may feel their generous investment worthwhile. □

RACISM

NO PUTTING UP WITH MURDER

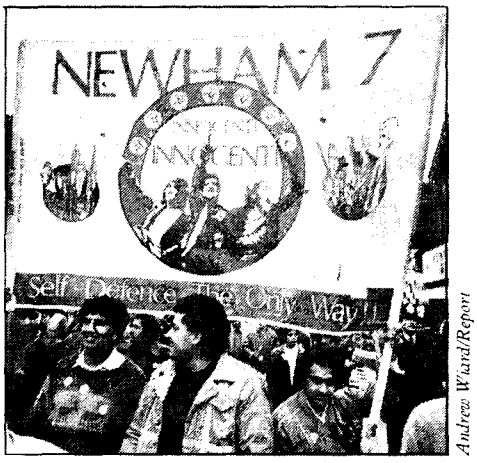
Amrit Wilson and Zubaida Motala report on the East End protest against the police

BY THE END of last Saturday in London's East End, 33 demonstrators had been arrested and Forest Gate police station had almost been held under siege by the crowd. Despite the legality of the protest march, police action against it was seen by local people as an attempt to stop black people marching through Newham at all.

The 2,500 demonstrators, mainly young Asians and Afro-Caribbeans with a sizeable number of white anti-racists, were marching in support of the black people involved in two major cases of alleged racial attack and police racism — the Newham 7 and the Pryce brothers. The Newham 7 are seven young Asian men arrested and charged with affray after 15-20 white men from the Duke of Edinburgh pub on Romford Road had attacked a group of Asians on 7 April last year. Their trial is due to begin on 13 May.

The case of the Pryce brothers stems from 30 November last year when a white gang is alleged to have stabbed and killed 16-year-old Eustace Pryce. Three plainclothes policemen saw the incident from the top of a double decker bus. They arrested Gerald, Eustace's brother, who denies that he had taken part in the fight. Gerald was not allowed to go with Eustace to the hospital but taken to Plaistow police station, charged with affray and denied bail.

It was only after pressure from the community that five white youths were charged



Andrew Wiard/Report

The Newham 7 campaign joined forces with 'Justice for the Pryces

with manslaughter, but these charges were dropped and eventually only one, Martin Newhouse, was charged with murder. He was allowed out on bail. When Gerald was eventually also allowed bail it was conditional on his keeping out of Newham and not seeing his family. The date of the trial has not yet been announced.

If these two cases had become the latest symbol of the black community's anger, events at the demonstration put the seal on that bitterness. The police themselves refuse to comment on the demonstration but their tactics appear to have been carefully planned. All police leave in K division (which includes Newham) had been cancelled for the march. At least six other divisions — R,X,I,A,W and C — were drafted in. Throughout the day police helicopters hovered above while plainclothes police photographed demonstrators as they arrived and again from upstairs windows of houses along the route of the march.

AS THE MARCH neared Forest Gate police station, members of a police snatch squad were seen jumping over a barrier, lunging into the

Andrew Wiard/Report

Forest Gate police station: demonstrators were eventually released

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demonstration and dragging people into the police station. Truncheons were used; we saw one youth pinned to the ground with four police officers standing on his calves and shoulders.

Because of the snatch squad, the demonstrators stopped, sat down for a while, and then stood in front of the police station demanding the release of those arrested. After this the arrests continued sporadically in different parts of the crowd. One demonstrator was dragged off a lorry carrying a steel band and megaphone which had led the demonstration. He was dragged into a side street and pushed into a waiting District Support Unit van. Another was arrested, eyewitnesses claimed, for doing nothing except standing quietly in front of the police station.

Meanwhile, the organisers of the demonstrations told the crowd that they were 'negotiating' and the police were likely to release at least some of those arrested without charging them. In fact at that point many of those arrested were not at Forest Gate at all. They had been taken by the back entrance to West Ham police station and were being held and charged there.

By around 6.00 in the evening, it had begun to snow. Demonstrators were drifting off, but more and more police appeared to have arrived, eventually outnumbering the remaining demonstrators by about five to one. From time to time the police linked arms, compressing the crowd into a comparatively small area in front of the police station.

Suddenly around 6.15 the police decided that the demonstration was over. They surrounded the lorry, forced it to move off and then linked arms and charged the crowd, attacking everyone in their path. Eyewitnesses saw one boy of about 9 or 10 being attacked by eight policemen. A black woman was seen being thrown to the ground, surrounded by policemen and kicked. The police began, apparently for the first time during the demonstration, to shout racial abuse. One was heard telling an Afro-Caribbean youth: 'This is nothing to do with you, this is to do with the Pakis. They are using you.'

Demonstrators leaving the area found it saturated with police and at least one Asian youth was arrested as he quietly made his way home. Further along the planned route of the demonstration was an extremely large group of police officers outside the Duke of Edinburgh pub. Many local people felt that if the police had not succeeded in breaking up the march at Forest Gate police station, they would have tried to stop it at this point.

Angry and frustrated at not being able to protest, the Newham 7 Defence Committee and Justice for Pryces group have decided to call another march on 11 May at Plashet Park to assert the right of all black people and anti-racists to march through Newham. Added to their protest will be the cases of the 33 people arrested. Eleven have been charged with public order offences and are due to come up in Newham West Magistrates Court on 8, 9, 10 and 13 May. The rest have been released on bail and asked to return to West Ham police station. □

The demonstration for the Newham 7, Pryce brothers and the right to march starts at 1 pm, Plashet Park, Plashet Grove, East Ham, on 11 May.

TRADE UNIONS

UPSTAGING THE WOMEN

Meeting last weekend, Equity had time to discuss Bonapartism, apartheid and bellydancers but not the women's motion, reports Julia Pascal

CENTRE STAGE the Council of Equity survey their membership at the Annual General Meeting in the Royalty Theatre underneath a grubby red banner of half tragic, half comic masks. This is Day Two. Yesterday we had a motion calling the President, Derek Bond, to resign after his South African tour. Derek Bond starred in J.B. Priestley's 'An Inspector Calls'. A voice from the floor shouted, 'When an inspector calls in South Africa it's usually in the middle of the night'.

At last year's Equity AGM a motion proposed by the Women's Committee and seconded by the Afro-Asian Committee to appoint an Equal Opportunties Officer was passed by an overwhelming majority. But the Equity Council decided not to institute it. An angry Women's Committee was told that it could not pursue its aim and so a breakaway pressure group, The Campaign for Real Equality in Equity (CREE) was started in October 1984.

CREE point out that the TUC recommends the appointment and holds up the sister union ACTT, which appointed Equality Officer Sandra Horne four years ago, as a model. But the Equity Council prefers to ignore the voice of its female membership and the motion is pushed to the end of the day.

'This is Your Life' proclaims a silver plaque in the Royalty and indeed this Equity meeting reflects a microcosm of British cultural conflicts. The row about South Africa is temporarily abated and now the Variety Artists make their plea for a minimum fee. One woman gets up. 'We're the poor relations in Equity', she says, 'and our position has got worse because cabaret in the provinces now means Arab belly dancers and night clubs owned by foreigners who don't want anything to do with Equity'. The outburst against 'foreigners' moves to a criticism of pub entertainment.

Meanwhile time is passing and Sue McGoun, Chair of the Women's Committee, is getting worried. What happens if the motion does not get heard? She tells me how the Women's Committee tried to have meetings with Sandra Horne and how they were told that if they did they would be flouting Equity policy.

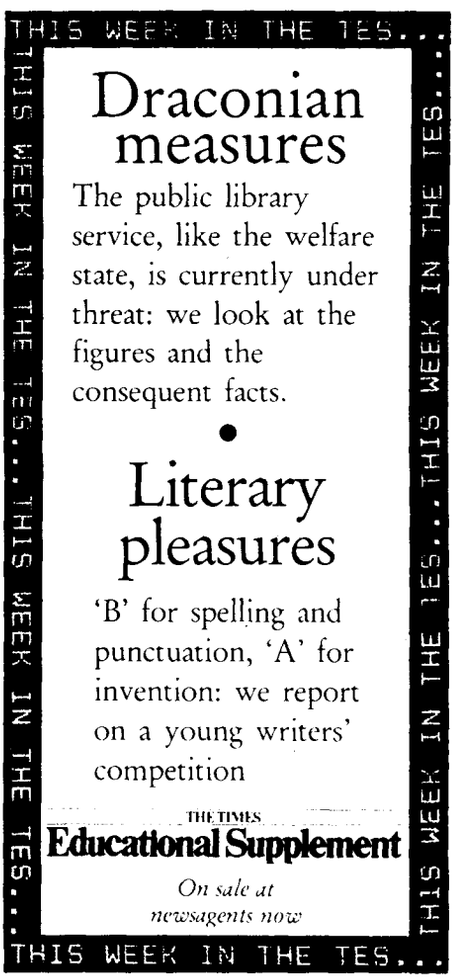
Feeling stifled, they formed CREE in order to hold this talk and start research into women's work patterns. The need is for more imaginative casting and here the race issue spills over. 'If a casting breakdown asks for a doctor or lawyer there is no reason why that person has to be a white male'. She quotes research from a paper published by European Broadcasting Review July 1983. 'Women appear distinctly less often in both fiction and non fiction; are on screen for a shorter time, have less opportunity to say anything and are interrupted more often.'

But apart from all the research there is one hard fact which really offends the Women's Committee and shows them how the Council views their plea for equality. In 1979 the Women's Commitee was offered money by the Equal Opportunities Commission for a paid researcher to conduct a survey among Equity members. The Council turned it down.

The debate goes on and a motion calling for wider casting of disabled performers is passed by an overwhelming majority. 'Who would dare speak against this?' asks one woman, 'but they don't want to pass the same motion for women members'. Another is itching to get on stage and present her motion but the debate has moved on to the impotence of Equity in the face of the GLC abolition and Arts Council cuts. 'We're lagging behind other unions', says Sarah Martin, 'At Granada sexual discrimination is an offence. Even the Arts Council is considering making an Equal Opportunities clause in all its contracts. But Equity remains silent.'

The race issue resurfaces as a motion calling for the casting of 'foreign stars' in British products to be halted. Vanessa Redgrave gets up and delivers a moving reply describing this motion as 'close to National Front thinking' and the motion is rejected. But what to do about the closures of theatres? The debate returns to the abolition of the GLC and metropolitan councils. 'Strike', says one member.

But the call to strike is ignored and the discussion moves on to the Council's motion to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institute a postal ballot. The Workers' Revolutionary Party members oppose the motion. 'I've seen the President of this Union take blood money from South Africa and now he wants to take scab money from the government, money from this right-wing Bonapartist government', says one speaker. 'What's Bonapartist?' asks a voice from the stalls. 'Vanessa's been using it all day'.

Alice Lidderdale, a middle-aged white woman, gets up to speak in favour of the ballot but hecklers shout 'Rubbish'. She pauses for attention and then says firmly, 'It's no use shouting me down. I'm a stage manager'. The audience laughs and she continues, 'Let's fund two courses here and now. One on microphone technique (laughter) and one on modern history from Napoleonic times onwards' (applause). But the motion falls and the recurring issue of postal balloting is lost by Council.

NOW IT'S 5.30 and the motions relating to the Women's Subcommittee are not going to be heard. Efua Taylor, Chair of the Afro-Asian Committee and member of the Women's Committee, tells me that the Afro-Asian Committee has a higher profile within Equity because 'people are more frightened of appearing racist than sexist'. In the street Peter Plouviez, the Union's General Secretary, tells me that 'there is no conspiracy to ignore the Women's Committee motion' but 'the Standing Orders Committee decided to put the motion at the end because they assumed the issue does not have much importance for the membership'.

I ask him if he thinks it's extraordinary that even though the membership voted for an Equality Officer, Council refused to implement this. 'No it's not extraordinary', he replies. 'We're very short staffed as it is and such an appointment might be counter-productive'. As I ask questions he backs off down the street.

Meanwhile the women behind the questions will have to wait another year for their voices to be heard. □

NCCL

LIBERTIES UNDER ATTACK

Are civil liberties an absolute individual right regardless of circumstances? Or do they depend on who is exercising them for what purpose? Lawyer and individual NCCL member Louise Christian (right) gives her view on the arguments at last weekend's crucial NCCL conference

DESPITE HEAVY pressure from commentators throughout the media, the NCCL voted absolutely decisively at its Annual General Meeting last weekend:

a) to reject the idea that strike-breaking is a 'fundamental right' equivalent to the right to strike, and

b) to continue not to give advice to organisations with racist aims and objectives or to individuals representing them.

If the well publicised moves by the General Secretary, Larry Gostin, to attract support from persons on the right of the political spectrum really had been successful, presumably the voting would have been much closer. Personally, I believe that Gostin has been stopped at the eleventh hour by the membership from pursuing a course which would have irreparably damaged not only NCCL but also the whole cause of civil rights and liberties in the country.

It is no accident that the NCCL AGM was dominated first by a discussion about resolving conflict between individual and collective rights and secondly about whether a 'pure' civil liberties line is an adequate response to racism. The concept of civil liberties as the domain and concern of the Left is under attack from the new free enterprise Tories of Thatcherism. They wish to extend what they believe to be individual 'civil liberties' (e.g. to choose private education and health care, to opt out of trade union membership) at the expense of both individual and collective rights. The radicalism of these born again Tories brings into sharp focus the way in which rights — individual and collective — can conflict with one another.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in the area of trade union rights. One of NCCL's strengths over the last decade has been the links with the trade unions so carefully built up by Patricia Hewitt, the last General Secretary. At the AGM she was one of the most compelling speakers against the notion of a fundamental right to strike-break.

A succession of speakers pointed out that collective rights are not just the sum of individual rights. The right to strike is only effectively exercised if all workers go on strike and those who break a strike detract from the action of the strikers. The ability to strike or withdraw labour is the only means workers have to bring pressure to bear on their employers. Although it is lawful to strike-break, it directly attacks the right to strike and cannot itself be a fundamental right if trade union rights mean anything at all.

A resolution tabled for discussion at the AGM asserting someone's 'right' not to join a trade union was withdrawn; but had it been discussed the issues would have been much the same. In his opening address to the AGM, Larry Gostin claimed that NCCL should not regard itself as any more pro-trade unions than anti-police. Obviously NCCL is not and should not be opposed to the existence of a police force but I believe it should be committed to the existence and effectiveness of trade unions, as the only real guarantors of workers' rights against employers.

While the AGM met the police clashed with those demonstrating over the Newham 7 case and racist attacks outside Forest Gate police station (see p.12). There were few black people at the NCCL AGM and it is an open secret that community defence campaigns organised by black people see little of relevance on offer at NCCL. This is extremely sad because although the self-organisation of black people is crucial in the face of institutionalised racism, NCCL could at least be a resource to black people struggling for their rights. Instead three members of the National Front saw mileage for their cause in attending the NCCL AGM and even asking to speak. Earlier they had distributed a leaflet claiming that the National Front is committed to defending civil liberties — surely a sick joke.

The debate on whether the NCCL should advise organisations with racist aims and objectives or individuals representing those organisations has now dominated two AGMs and become a largely sterile discussion. The reason it has taken up so much time has been largely symbolic; the issue has crystallised fears about NCCL's lack of commitment to anti-racist work as a priority. But the second time around, NCCL can be said to have decided on a clear and sensible policy on advice giving. It will not advise organisations such as the National Front or individuals representing them but it will not refuse to advise any individual on the grounds of that person's racialism.

'Freedom of speech' for racists amounts to a denial of black people's rights and it is on these grounds that NCCL has supported the laws against incitement to racial hatred. Similarly I have no doubt that allowing the National Front free access to NCCL offices to make unlimited propaganda capital out of its association with the NCCL would inhibit or prevent black people from exercising their right to advice.

The conflict must be resolved in the light of a clear commitment to anti-racism in the same way that the conflict between individual and collective rights is resolved by a commitment to trade union rights. If being committed in this way is 'left wing' (and to radical Tories, it is) then I am glad that the NCCL has voted to stay a 'left wing' organisation. But I think the shifting of ground has been on the political Right; for example the Tories' attack on trade unions has been taken up by people in the SDP who a few years ago would not have dreamed of being associated with it. I believe that the NCCL can and should remain a broad-based organisation but it must not compromise fundamental principles in order to do so. True civil liberties and rights are under attack as never before; NCCL should not be tempted to shift its ground under the onslaught. □

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NORTHERN IRELAND

ANOTHER TRIAL OF STRENGTH

Bernard Crick looks at how Ulster parties are fighting this month's local elections to the District Councils

ON 15 MAY Ulstermen and women go to the polls yet again with passion and futility — this time for the local government elections. All seats are up in the newly drawn districts. Four years have gone by since the last elections to the 26 District Councils.

Nowhere is more sound and fury expended over so little real power. Long ago public housing was wisely taken from local control, the most blatant source of anti-Catholic discrimination belatedly removed. The councils don't even control street lighting. Recently Christopher Patten, as Minister in Northern Ireland responsible for transport, devoted quite five minutes of a statement to the Assembly to street lighting, claiming a 90 per cent nightly light-up rate — amid sceptical guffaws and raucous hilarity from the Unionist and Alliance members present (and remember that there only are Unionist and Alliance members present). Moving around that night after dark, a little, I agreed with them.

Mr Patten is an astute politician, so I'm still trying to work out what he was trying to keep them off by throwing them such a diverting bone. The advisory Assembly is as yet little more than a powerless County Council. The Social Democratic and Labour Party's election manifesto actually opposes the return of real powers to local government. It wants power-sharing in a new Assembly and some role for the Irish government in the governing of Northern Ireland, or nothing. At the moment it is likely to get nothing, but at least its opposition to the return of local powers keeps whatever percentage of street lights that actually work shining equally on Catholic and Protestant alike.

The local government elections are, nonetheless, an important show of strength between the nationalists and unionists. If legal power will not be affected, authority, the ultimate basis of all power, is. The result itself is wearisomely predictable and static. Yet a more dramatic and unpredictable struggle is going on within the two communities.

The Rev Ian Paisley appears to campaign against Sinn Fein under the slogan 'Smash Sinn Fein', but he really wants to turn his personal triumph in the European elections into his party's overwhelming dominance in the unionist community. The Official Unionists understand this quite well and signal that they are the more *responsible* intransigent enemies of republicanism while trying hard not to mention the Rev Dr in every speech.

The SDLP, fighting 23 out of the 26 districts, names the issues as housing and unemployment — over which the councils have no control or power whatever. These are not in fact issues that separate them from unionist politicians — especially not from the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP). Few monetarists or Thatcherites there; almost all are down-to-earth, welfare-minded working people who would fit into the old British Labour Party if it wasn't for their bigots and our intellectuals. But the SDLP is signalling within the Catholic community that it cares for realistic and down-to-earth things, is trying to stem the grim challenge mounted by Sinn Fein in the Assembly elections but checked in the Euro elections last year. It wishes to be the only *political* voice of the minority.

Sinn Fein mounts a smaller campaign than expected and has its own bitter divisions. At least all is not smooth in its relations with the IRA and with the Army Council's policy of keeping a tactical balance between politics and terrorism. It is possible that a fundamental split (once again) or an enforced change of policy is underway. Some hawks have been expelled but the doves have had their electoral budget cut. For the moment a reduced electoral effort is cleverly concentrated on three or four councils where Sinn Fein might hold the balance, and thus open up splits or bitter disputes within the SDLP on the issue of working with them or letting the unionists back by default.

No party fights all the 566 seats. Most are so utterly hopeless and denominationally rock-solid. The OUP fights 248 seats, DUP 221, SDLP 172, Alliance 90, and Sinn Fein 89. The Workers Party (the heirs of the old Official Sinn Fein and/or IRA, who now preach an admirable if unrequited nondenominational socialism) only mount 27 candidates; and there are just over a hundred independents. Alliance, in favour of the Union (because a majority actually want it) but also in favour of power-sharing, will stay alive through second preference votes — from SDLP because most of its leaders are Catholic and from the OUP because their regulars would do anything rather than vote DUP.

Some day Alliance could hold the balance. And even in bloodstained Ulster some facetiousness breaks through: four candidates fight under the general label of Capt Floccipansinihilfication's All Night Party. Though I was looking for them in Robinson's bar the night the fire broke out (an accident), they were not there.

SO EACH GROUPING fights itself while pretending to fight the hallowed enemy; or, put more kindly, each community has a huge internal political dilemma. The unionists, of course, seek above all to maintain the Union, but with little love left for their fellow countrymen on the mainland whom they call 'Brits' (the Australian pejorative intended to rhyme with 'shits'). Their real objective is simply not to be governed by Dublin and the Irish Constitution (a view not inherently unreasonable).

But how? Their great rift is between integrationists and devolutionists. The integrationists of the OUP are led by Mr Molyneaux and nagged by Mr Powell. Yet everyone else knows that it is a dead end. Not even Mrs T. in all her glory regards Northern Ireland as, in St Enoch's bizarre phrase, 'a normal part of the United Kingdom', or would contemplate giving Ulster districts the powers of English local authorities (such as they were). 'Integration' simply means a continuance for ever, or until we weary, of direct rule — which is the second best preference of a majority in both communities in the North but the least preferred by any British politician.

In their hearts all unionist politicians wish for the return of the powers of old Stormont and majority rule. But they know it is impossible. At least a Thatcher government has taught them that. So 'Assembly unionists', that is the DUP and some of the OUP, are in a mood for some kind of compromise. They want to negotiate with the SDLP and have tried to; but the SDLP's John Hume has set what he must know to be impossible public preconditions. At present he won't even negotiate privately and would-be intermediaries get a wasp in their ear.

For the SDLP's dilemma is that they put all their hopes in last year's New Ireland Forum process, neglected what they had long tried to restore — a political process within Northern Ireland, and gave no thought to how pressure could be put on the British government to meet the Irish government half-way. They dislike the very atmosphere of Westminster so much that they constantly neglect 'the British dimension'. If Hume negotiates with the DUP, he risks secession from his hard nationalist wing who

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now say 'an all Ireland solution or nothing' — as if the Protestant majority and the Irish constitution did not exist.

But if Hume does not show some political progress in Northern Ireland, while waiting for the conjunction of a Kinnock and a FitzGerald government, then, compared with all the activity of Sinn Fein/IRA, SDLP may have little to show the community from a few council seats. Could they survive next year's Assembly elections on an abstentionist ticket? Many Catholics will take the view that if there's abstaining to be done, Sinn Fein abstains somewhat more demonstrably. □

EDUCATION

LESS ABOUT JESUS MORE ABOUT JOBS

Anita Bennett and Paul Anderson look at the protests of school children, sparked by the teacher's dispute

Sheffield Newspapers Ltd

Student 'flying pickets' in Sheffield: frustration with Thatcherism is breaking out

SHEFFIELD EDUCATION authority is ranked among the country's top six by the schools' Inspectorate, its standards of provision are impressive — yet teachers there now speak of a massive 'acceptable depression' that settles on fourth formers about to start their 'O' level options. Says education chief Mike Bowers, who two months ago witnessed demonstrations by hundreds of schoolchildren: 'You could see kids who were happy, enthusiastic and contented slowly getting depressed — not sleeping, bags under their eyes.'

The prospect or experience of long-term unemployment has appeared to affect most people in the same sort of ways: apathy, despair, a profound disaffection with society. But in the last few months those still at school, being educated for a way of life they know is more than likely to be beyond their grasp, have begun rebelling.

Even before the recent demonstrations against the Youth Training Scheme, school-children have been protesting, picketing, and getting suspended trying to get across a message of anger and despair, especially from the North of England. In the aftermath of the miners' strike, children in one comprehensive, Carter Lodge, Sheffield, walked out and marched 12 miles in a 'flying picket' around the city to get other youngsters to join them. In front of City School the school gardeners were called 'scabs', along with nervous youngsters inside.

The catalyst appears to be the long-running teachers' dispute. 'We have no say in the school. Because of the teachers, we have to wait outside for 40 minutes after meals, even when it's raining. And there are no toilets available,' complained Rachel Barker, 16, a key figure in the events at Carter Lodge. Her friend, top A-stream student Paul Adams, is equally unrepentant although he was arrested by police for obstruction. 'Even if one exam were affected I would walk out.' But none of the group of twelve gathered in Rachel's living room had any hopes for a job after school. Only one in ten of Sheffield's school leavers finds a job. Half go on to the YTS.

For the 6 March school strike Sheffield Anarchists handed out a leaflet urging children to 'Get wise, use your imagination, make March the 6th a hellraising colourful destructive day. Smash your mind-twisting prison of an exam factory.' That, plus a 'School Stoppers Handbook' on 101 ways to disrupt school, sent one headmaster into such a tizzy that he sent the anarchist material to the Director of Public Prosecutions. But Mike Bower doesn't credit them with much influence: 'It wouldn't work unless people were willing to listen.'

In Carlton-Bolling school in Bradford, headmaster Martin Flecnoe, also blamed 'outside agitators' for inciting his pupils to demonstrate. One boy lost his thumb in the iron gates of City Hall when children on the rampage marched downtown; and police confirmed that five cars were damaged and one shop window broken.

The two girls who made the banner for the demo, Julie Wood and Jayne Hall, were upset because the teachers' dispute stopped their school meals. 'It weren't fair us having no dinners. So Jane made a banner saying 'No Dinners No Lessons We're on Strike'. We just wanted it to be a peaceful demonstration but it didn't turn out like that.' As to the idea of outside agitators; 'People said it were left-wing, from the Labour Party, but the only helpers were us two, who put the banner together', said Jane and Julie.

A sister striker from Fairfax Community School nearby, Samantha Newman, had a further thought: 'The children these days, they don't want to be small talked, they don't want to be part of this fantasy that everybody's going to get a job when they leave school'.

Armthorpe Comprehensive, in Doncaster, is now beginning an enquiry into a demonstration on 8 March where 29 children were suspended. It occurred on the same day that many of the children's fathers marched back to work at Markham Main pit. The school is considered extremely traditional, retains the uniform,

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teachers' academic gowns and highly religious assemblies. One student, Simon Johnson, who marched with the miners but didn't go out on school strike, feels the school assemblies to be irrelevant. 'I wish they spent less time on Jesus and more time getting us prepared for jobs.'

IF ADULTS south of Birmingham are comforted by the knowledge that life has dealt them much better chances than their fellow citizens further north, their children are not — as last week's demonstrations about the YTS showed. Disaffection in the South is affecting schools too. On 19 April, 800 girls from Southlands school in Reading demonstrated about the teachers' action. The following week, 41 boys from Bulmershe school in Whitley in Berkshire went to the girls' school to distribute leaflets urging them to set up school unions. The police were called and the boys detained in Reading police station.

'Reds Under the Desks: How Young Socialists are promoting their classroom rebellion' proclaimed the *Reading Chronicle* on its front page. It quoted teacher Stan Grue's belief that: 'It would be most unfortunate if the relatively privileged young people of Berkshire, where the YTS has a good record, were to believe that they have the same sort of grievance as youngsters in Merseyside or Northern Ireland.'

But for others, the acquiescence of young people has been a more disturbing sign of the times. For Sheffield's Ray Hedge 'the remarkable thing is that the scene is so quiet. I'm surprised that the backlash is not greater. Their common attitude to politics is that it's like the weather, nothing that you can do about it. So they drop out into passive, sub-cultural behaviour.'

So far the protests have been quick sporadic flares, which may just die away. But as Mike Bowers, the besieged socialist, puts it: 'We've been trying to keep the lid on the pot while the government has been turning up the flames beneath it.' □

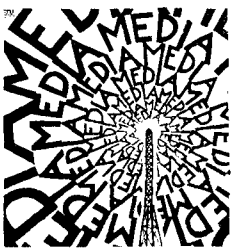
This England

£3 book tokens for entries printed. (On postcards, please.)

□Dartmoor National Park Committee was yesterday expected to refuse permission for a private nuclear shelter for a Dawlish man to be sited in Badger Wood, Ashburton. Ashburton Town Council said the design was inadequate and the shelter would be too distant from the home of the applicant who could use it as a summer residence. — *Mid-Devon Advertiser* (S.M. Robinson)

□Comic strip character Jane, a feature of the *Daily Mirror* from 1932 to 1959 is to return to help boost flagging sales. Publisher Robert Maxwell said she would teach readers how a video works and how not to get AIDS. — *Financial Times* (R. Wait)

□Mindful of a new £15,000 spending limit on each item, after which permission must be obtained, the council is bombarding Whitehall with requests for permissions and permits. The limit on animal foods has been reached; so S. Yorkshire has asked Whitehall if it can buy extra ants' eggs to feed six goldfish kept in a bowl in a Rotherham Park. — *Observer* (George Moor)



Banking on Shah to make the break

Paul Foot

SIR JAMES Goldsmith was so infuriated by investigative journalism that he started a news magazine. Now Mr Eddy Shah is so infuriated by national newspaper unions that he plans to start a national newspaper.

I have read very carefully all the statements by Mr Shah on his plans for a new paper. Very, very few of them deal with the content of the paper he wants to produce. We can guess it will be another right-wing paper, supporting the Tories and bashing the unions, whose politics and attitude to life will be indistinguisable from those of the *Sun, The Times*, the *Express*, the *Star*, the *Mail*, the *Telegraph*, the *Financial Times*; that is to say, three quarters of 12 million papers, which currently circulate round the country every morning.

Mr Shah, however, is not very interested in politics. He is not very interested in journalism either. The journalistic standards of his Messenger papers are very low indeed. Shah once refused his journalists a training scheme on the grounds that they were all graduates, and already educationally overqualified. (He was not including two young reporters he had taken on; Chris Buckley, the son of his editorial consultant — since resigned — and Nicola Graham, the daughter of his managing director.)

Come to that, Mr Shah is not frightfully good at making huge profits either. In the year to March 1983 his operation produced a true profit (after allowing for a huge loss on his paper in Bury) of less than £5,000 out of a turnover of over £2m.

So *why*? Why have the Hungarian State Bank and other rich people flocked to back his new venture? They are not going to make masses of money out of it, and they have enough Tory propaganda already. The answer came from Mr Shah himself when he seemed to be telling other newspaper proprietors to stop fighting each other, and fight the union instead. He talks all the time about new technology, not because of any great advantage in itself, but because it could, if it got off the ground quickly, effectively break the strong unions which control the printing of national newspapers today. The only conceivable reason for the fanfare which has greeted Shah's new venture is his track record for smashing unions.

Fleet Street union bashing is such an enjoyable sport even in leftish circles that it seems a poor show to spoil the fun. Are not, it is widely asked, the restrictive practices of the unions, and the huge incomes of Fleet Street workers part of the general malaise which infects our newspapers?

The answer is no, they are not. Editorially, our newspapers are worse, by general agreement, than they have ever been. Standards have slipped beyond belief on almost every side. But this has nothing to do with the unions. It is the fault of people who control priorities and the style of newspapers. And that is not the unions.

Nor is it true, as it is widely believed, that the strong unions in Fleet Street somehow obstruct the sale of newspapers. More national newspapers are sold in this country than anywhere else in the world. In spite of the declining standards, in spite of television, in spite of the recession, millions of British citizens persist in their astonishing habit of buying at least one newspaper every day, and probably two on Sundays.

There are great advantages in strong unions. They give people a sense of security, which in turn makes the working places relatively contented. The strong unions act as a magnet to other trade unionists in trouble. While the papers, in general, were disgracing themselves throughout the miners' strike with grotesque bias against the strikers' case, the strong unions in Fleet Street were a constant source of encouragement to the strikers. Some £2m went to miners' families from Fleet Street during the strike, and the newspapers' canteens were crammed day in, day out with miners' families who had travelled to London as guests of Fleet Street trade unionists.

I am amazed that Brian MacArthur, who has done such a good job and encouraged so many journalists on the *Western Morning News*, should have sought and accepted the editorship of this stalking horse for union-bashers. I predict that if he does eventually become the editor, he will not last too long.

ON EASTER SATURDAY, the *Bradford Telegraph* and *Argus* published a front-page article quoting a young woman as making an incredible plea: 'flood the city with gypsies'. Mandy Farrar, co-ordinator of the Bradford Traveller Project, had written a letter last September, which ended with a jocular reference to flooding the city with gypsies.

No one could contact Mandy Farrar at Easter. She was away for the weekend. She could not, therefore, explain the context of the quote. Still, the paper went ahead. When Mandy came back from holiday, she found that her council flat had been attacked with burning newspapers.

This made another front page of 10 April 'Fire Attack on Gypsy Worker'. In the first edition, the paper published Mandy Farrar's address. She was inundated with obscene telephone calls. As she lives alone with her eight-year-old daughter, she decided she had to leave.

Laurie Sear, deputy editor of the *Telegraph and Argus* apoligised. 'We took the address out of later editions' he says. 'That doesn't excuse putting it in, though'.

Quite. □

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DIARY

Martin Jacques

Life has begun to look up over this last week. The problem has been of a somewhat mundane, but nonetheless far-reaching character. Two months or so ago, the builders descended. Since then, most of the time has been spent without kitchen, bathroom or toilet. Home becomes somwhere you rush away from as soon as possible at night. It's not much fun. But there is one odd compensating emotion: the feeling that somehow, for a limited period, you can live without the modern essentials. The adaptability of homo sapiens. But any such emotion was rapidly displaced last weekend with the return of a toilet, a bath — and the beginnings of a kitchen. The winter camp 'holiday' is nearly over at last.

○

The 40th anniversary of VE Day is turning out to be a poignant reminder of how important war memories remain. Especially if what they were about is ignored, maligned or deliberately suppressed. I am thinking, of course, of the mess the Reagan Administration has got itself into over the Bitburg cemetery. In some ways the whole thing is predictable. Reagan's anti-Soviet mission seeks to erase any memory of the wartime alliance and celebrate the postwar divisions. The anniversary clearly presented a problem. But Reagan's handling of it shows the extent to which the radical Right has miscalculated American and European feelings. How? One factor is the new Cold War. To turn the last war into a celebration of postwar divisions looks at the least insensitive, at the worst malevolent and dangerous in the present international climate. Then there is Reagan's disregard, or evasion, of what Nazism was all about. That tells us something not unimportant I think, about the radical Right.

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This theme of the radical Right losing some of its touch is, of course, on our minds closer to home. Its short-term origins lie in the outcome of the miners' strike. In one sense, there's no disputing the fact that the government emerged triumphant. But this cannot conceal the fact that the government never won the hearts and minds of the people against the miners. Indeed as the strike reached its final phase — and people realised that the miners would not win — one could feel a creeping concern across a wide spectrum of opinion about the country's direction and the government's insensitivity and economic record.

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The issue around which this concern has most visibly crystallised is unemployment. And the Employment Institute with its Charter for Jobs is an expression of this new swathe of opinion. Some on the Left have dismissed it because it involves Tories, industrialists and the like. This is to miss the point. It is interesting precisely because of its breadth. The success of Thatcherism can never be measured solely in terms of Tory votes or Tory majorities. It has been its ability to order the national agenda, to create a new climate of priority and opinion which has been the key to its influence. Its defeat therefore depends on the creation of a new mood and a new set of priorities. The emergence of a broad body of opinion which refuses to accept that unemployment is inevitable, or necessary, or a secondary issue is central to making Thatcherism appear off-centre, partisan, and out of touch with the national mood. That is the significance of the Employment Institute: an expression of the beginnings of a new consensus that believes that tackling unemployment is the number one priority.

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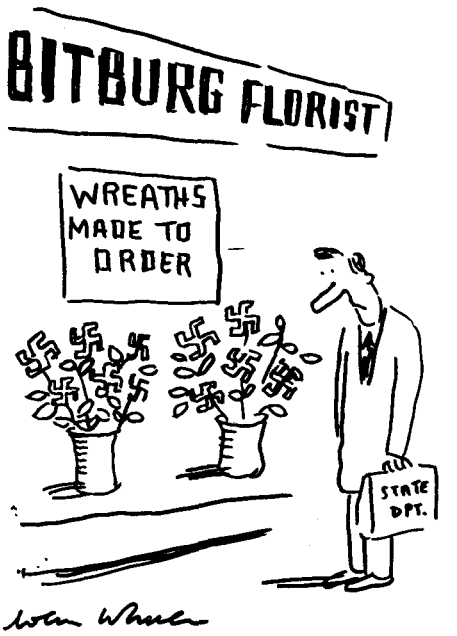
Somehow I managed to avoid most of the world snooker championship this year. I remember several years ago getting home rather late, switching on the TV and putting my feet up with the intention of watching a bit of snooker. As a rule, I found myself still in that posture when the last ball of the night had been potted. It became a mild addiction, not an inappropriate word given the identity of the tournament's sponsor. No such problem this year — well, not until last Sunday anyway. It had all the suspense — and partisanship — of *High Noon*. When we had finally willed Dennis Taylor to victory, feeling almost as tense and exhausted as no doubt he did, someone casually asked what percentage of viewers had been backing Steve Davis — 5 per cent perhaps?



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The end of the miners' strike not only marked something of a turning-point in Thatcherism's fortunes. It also, coupled with the ratecapping debacle, accelerated an underlying process of realignment on the Left. The major setback represented by the outcome of the miners' strike has been discussed in the labour movement with sobriety, not blood-letting. The hard Left has been on the defensive in a way few anticipated. And, within the Labour Party, a new realistic Left does seem to be emerging. But realignment is a cross-party tendency: it is affecting the whole of the Left. Indeed, one of its clearest expressions is in the Communist Party. I spent my weekend at a meeting of its Executive Committee preparing for the Special Congress in a fortnight's time at which the battle between the 'eurocommunists' and the 'hardliners' will come to a new head. The signs are that the latter will suffer a fairly crushing defeat.

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Such an outcome will surely encourage present realignments in the Labour Party. But the defeat of sectarianism on the Left should only be seen as the first stage: a sort of ideological clearing of the decks. In the present situation it's vital but it doesn't, of itself, resolve some rather bigger and more difficult questions: for instance, what has the Left to offer the 1990s, what does the renewal of the Left actually mean, or more specifically in my neck of the woods, the contribution the Communist Party might make to all this? These questions need, as soon as possible, to move centre-stage.

Martin Jacques is editor of Marxism Today.

ROGER WODDIS

The final pollution

'Mr Reagan has been strengthened in his determination to go ahead with Bitburg by support from Mr Nixon and Dr Kissinger — still two of the most respected voices in US foreign policy.' — Guardian

Let bygones be bygones, the past is the past,
The recent unpleasantness too bad to last;
The smoke from the chimneys that curled in the air
Dissolves in the solemn expressions we wear.
We show our true feelings by laying a wreath
And mourning the warriors buried beneath.

The programme goes forward, too late to abort,
Now Richard and Henry have pledged their support.
The President thinks to himself as he shaves,
'The young and misguided, now cold in their graves,
Were victims like those who were forced up the ramps.
It must have been hell for those running the camps'.

The voices of experts are those he respects:
They know about war and its lasting effects.
Their record is clean, they are wise and humane,
As merely to think of Cambodia makes plain,
A record so rare it must even impress
The envious ghosts of the Waffen SS.

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'WE ARE NOT LITTLE MICE. . .'

President Reagan continues to increase the pressures to bring down the legitimate government in Managua. Martha Gellhorn describes how the Nicaraguans are reacting to America's war

IN HIS ULTRA-SINCERE chocolate voice, President Reagan announces that Nicaragua is 'a Communist tyranny'. The *Contras*, America's hired killers, are 'the true revolutionaries fighting for freedom'. Clearly, the Sandinista government must go. Never mind that the Nicaraguans chose it, in their first ever honest general election. 'The fate of freedom' hangs in the balance or is at stake, I forget which. The boyish old President might must be right on that one, but not in the way he means.

In March, I roamed around Nicaragua talking with strangers. It is a forlorn country; Managua, the capital, a sprawling mess, scruffy little towns, worse villages, thin brown-skinned people in worn-out clothes, mountains peeled bare of forest never replanted, great empty spaces for a few cattle. Nicaragua looks battered, misused. Yet everything grows here; there is enough land for everyone, even the rich. Nicaragua is half the size of Britain with only 3,200,000 citizens, half of whom are under 16. All Nicaraguans needed for decent prosperity was decent government. At long last, they have a chance.

Ten miles above Matagalpa, safe from the *Contras*' northern attacks, the barren landscape changes into tropical Bavarian Alps. Because coffee bushes need shade, the fine trees were spared. In this beauty spot, a sour well-dressed woman, an hereditary coffee magnate, owns a hotel. 'I had no trouble with Somoza. I have no trouble with these Sandinistas. Of course I didn't vote. Nobody voted.' That is, nobody like her, yet 29 deputies represent the three parties of the Right in the National Assembly.

Her land produces a quarter of a million pounds of coffee. 'I have to sell to the government at a low price.' For three months a year, she employs hundreds of itinerant labourers to harvest the crop. 'Only women and children now. The men are in the militia. No one wants to work.' 'Where do the women and children come from?' 'Who knows?' she shrugged. 'When they're finished they go back to their places.'

'The farmers don't want to sell to the government, they only grow for themselves.' Farmers' roadside stalls sell luscious high-priced fruit and vegetables; the same in Managua. 'Anyway they're afraid to come to town for fear of being drafted.' 'How about fear of ambushes on the roads?' I asked. In the last six months of 1984, 129 civilians died, 69 were wounded in *Contra* ambushes, a daily danger. 'Or fear of being kidnapped?' 163 men, a strange way to recruit 'true revolutionaries'.

The lady was only concerned with her personal fear, losing her land. All property of the Somozas and their cronies was confiscated, the land distributed to the peasants. 'Have any of your friends been expropriated?' 'Not yet.' Not after five and a half years of Sandinista rule. 'I make no profit from coffee, only from the hotel.' I said, 'You must have had richer guests before?' 'There are plenty of rich people now. Industrialists. They're making money, they're doing very well.'

Jenny Matthews/Format

Polling day November 1984 in Managua: Reagan refuses to accept the verdict of this ballot box

THE YOUNG MAN had the pale beauty wrongly attributed to poets and a terrible limp. We were talking in the small grimy office of the Frente Sandinista, the political party of the government. His right hip was out of line, the leg four inches shortened. He got this crippling wound as a student, fighting here in the streets of Matagalpa against Somoza's *Guardia*. 'We go to the people, we listen to complaints, we explain the shortages, rising prices, why the boys must register for the draft, why we can't do more, faster. The people know there's a way but they don't see it. They only feel the economic difficulties. But if Reagan invades our country, it would take a long time to kill us all.'

In Managua, the *barrios* are the slums, old and new. The old are narrow dark little houses like tunnels, built to last, with cement floors. The new are unsteady, one-room boxes made of planks and corrugated tin, with dirt floors: homes of the refugees from the frontiers. Two middle-aged cheerful women sat on the steps of adjoining houses, old slums. They were cousins and had lived here for 20 years, each sewing 12 shirts a day for 180 *cordobas*, another aspect of local capitalism. The poor are protected by fixed price rationed food in government markets. Private markets flourish as do small-time spivs who trade goods that fell of trucks.

When Somoza, in a parting gesture, ordered Managua to be bombed and strafed, a machine gun bullet broke the older woman's leg. That was past, the future is her 16 year old son joining the army next year. She asked suddenly, 'was the war in Vietnam horrible?' Foreigners must know everything. 'Very', I said, never forgetting it. 'That is what Reagan would do to us here.' Things were hard because of the *Contras*, 'but our government belongs to us, we are not little mice any more.'

In a new slum, in this heat, a string thin woman, almost toothless, barefooted, in greyish black rags, was slapping tortillas and toasting them on a sheet of scrap iron over a wood fire. She supports her family — an old ailing husband, two young children — by selling tortillas to the neighbours. They are refugees from the Costa Rican frontier.

'ARDE kidnapped my sons, two boys, 22 and 24. They hit them and tied them up and took them away.' ARDE is the invasion force in the south — also backed by Reagan. 'We know the *Contras*, they are Somoza's men. But ARDE, those are the real traitors! They were on our side and now they attack us. They walk around with handfuls of dollars to show they are rich while we are poor. They come into villages and rob whatever they want, animals, chickens, furniture. They kill people and run away to Costa Rica. *Traitors!* For love of our country,

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we must fight them. We escaped at night, walking, with what we could carry. I pray I will see my sons again.' They built their wretched shelter and dug a latrine like everyone else here. 'There's a water tap across the street. The children go to school. We have a clinic nearby. The government helps me with very cheap dough.' She doesn't complain.

SANDINISTA OFFICIALS are too busy for stray visitors; their enemies have time and talk freely. Not much of a 'Communist tyranny' where capitalists keep their capital, badmouth the government, and publish their scornful views in a well-circulated daily paper. Either President Reagan knows he is lying or he doesn't know he is lying; ominous, either way.

In the elegant headquarters of COSEP, the Nicaraguan equivalent of the CBI, a charming industralist said, '95 per cent of Nicaraguans were in favour of the Sandinistas when they came to power. Somoza was an obstacle to development. He had to go.' It cost the lives of 50,000 other people to do that job. 'We're not worried about taxes and profits, we're concerned about liberty.' Sixty per cent of the economy is still in private hands.

Doe the new laws regulating the economy affect his business? 'No, I have a small chemical industry, everything is small in Nicaragua. They think I am essential.' His friends? 'Not yet, but we feel very insecure.' COSEP won't invest, won't co-operate, they are sitting on their hands: a novel form of sabotage by passivity.

'If you got power, what about social welfare?' I asked. Major Sandinista programmes: a continuing campaign against illiteracy, a network of clinics in a country where tuberculosis, poverty's disease, is endemic. 'Social welfare of course,' said the charming man. 'We say you cannot have prosperous business with poor people.'

In the meantime, to the end of 1984 US taxes have paid for the murder of 3,954 harmless men and women and 3,346 children; the uprooting of 142,980 people, now refugees; the destruction of 137 hopeful, modest infant centres, clinics, schools, co-operatives, built by the Sandinistas for the peasants. If American taxpayers saw the photo record of this would they feel that their money was well spent? President Reagan's destabilization plan grinds on: torrential propaganda, strangling economic boycott, death and devastation, at bargain rates. If the plan worked, resulting in chaos, suitable Nicaraguans would receive power on a plate from an American President, in the traditional style.

In 1823, the Monroe Doctrine established the claim that the US had a backyard and the right to supervise it. Since 1909, when the US ousted a popular Nicaraguan President, the American government has actively supported its own choice for President of Nicaragua, sending the Marines if there was any sign of revolt. No American President denounced the long and real Somoza tyranny.

Nicaragua proves that a poor people can fight and win the right to choose a government for itself. Nicaragua is setting a bad example to Latin America. This heady idea of national self determination might spread to all the other poor people in the area. The fate of freedom does hang in the balance.

The Sandinista government can be overthrown only by direct US military intervention. Easier than Vietnam, perhaps, but blood-soaked. And what would be the fine moral difference between the USSR invading Hungary and Czechoslovakia, to teach those people obedience, and the US invading Nicaragua? □

CYPRUS

FOLLOWING ANKARA's LEAD

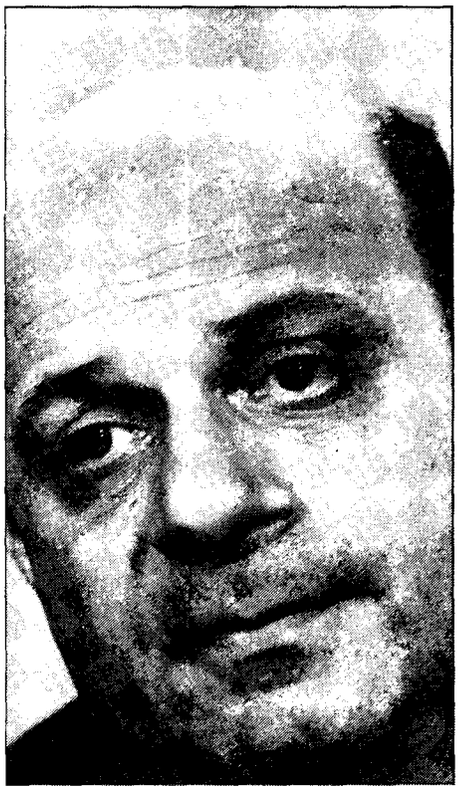
Chris Christiansen looks forward to the referendum that will give Denktash dictatorial powers

PRESIDENT Kyprianou's maladroit handling of the Cyprus summit has provided a space for Rauf Denktash to consolidate his mini-empire in northern Cyprus, with the aim of complete integration into Turkey. Last year's summit fiasco at the United Nations took the pressure off the Reagan Administration to link 'aid' to Turkey with a 'solution' in Cyprus. Now Denktash has moved to get a constitution giving him far-reaching repressive powers ratified by a referendum on 5 May.

It has been one of the anomalies of the continuing Turkish presence in Northern Cyprus that until now a relatively liberal democratic structure has been maintained there. Political parties such as the left-wing Republican Turkish Party (RTP) and Communal Liberation Party (CLP) (which correspond to the left and centre respectively of Bulent Ecevit's banned Republican Peoples Party on the mainland) and the radical Dev-Is trade union federation (which corresponds to the banned DISK federation in Turkey) operate openly, if somewhat carefully, under the eyes of a mainland regime which has ruthlessly crushed all form of dissent at home. At the 1981 elections the RTP and CLP — who are both fiercely opposed to economic and political integration with Turkey — polled over 50 per cent of the popular vote and captured 19 of the 40 assembly seats. There is a very real prospect of the ruling National Unity Party — which is little more than a collection of sycophants held together by Denktash's powers of patronage — being routed by the left-wing opposition in the elections scheduled for June.

Whether or not Ankara would tolerate a left-wing coalition in northern Cyprus is a moot point — in the past it has made it clear that it would not. But there is no doubt that a left-dominated assembly would severely embarrass Denktash with regard to the implementation of his own — and Ankara's — economic policies.

The Turkish premier Turgut Ozal wants northern Cyprus transformed into a free-trade zone appendage of the Turkish economy, servicing the Middle Eastern market. Last November, plans were announced to integrate the banking systems of the mainland and northern Cyprus, to remove all barriers to Turkish investment. As both Denktash and Ozal well realise, this can only complicate and



Camera Press

Turkey's man in Cyprus brings Turkish laws to the island

prejudice future negotiations aimed at finding a federal solution to the Cyprus problem. But both the RTP and CLP will oppose any form of formal economic integration with Turkey and any attempt to establish new free trade zones in northern Cyprus.

They have also made it clear that they will not maintain the system of tax concessions and other favours currently bestowed upon multinational companies operating in the north. Attracting such companies has been one of the central planks of Denktash's economic policy, while their phenomenal profitability has provided an important source of income — both in the form of perks and dividend payments — for his political supporters.

It is with these considerations in mind that Denktash has committed himself to imposing a replica of the 1982 Turkish constitution upon the Turkish Cypriot community. Shortly after declaring UDI in 1983, he signalled his intentions in this direction by dissolving the elected assembly (in which he was unable to scrape together a workable majority) and replacing it with one packed with his own nominated supporters to frame a new constitution. Despite protests from the UN Secretary General the constitution goes to a 'referendum' on 5 May. If ratified, the executive — which effectively means Denktash himself — is arrogated powers similar to, and in some cases exceeding, those enjoyed by Evren and the Council of National Security in Turkey.

For example, (Article II) only parties deemed to be 'following the principles of Ataturk' will be permitted to operate. Nowhere, however, are these 'principles' defined and there is little doubt that they will be used, as they have been in Turkey, to outlaw socialist parties if and when the need arises. The executive is empowered (Articles 124-127) to suspend all basic freedoms, including the right to strike, in

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the face of an economic crisis or 'signs that there will be violence'. It is similarly empowered (Articles 90-112) to issue binding decrees on economic matters, and to conclude international agreements without the assembly's approval.

His own oft-stated and undoubtedly genuine admiration for Evren-style 'democracy' apart, Denktash clearly sees the new constitution as a means of resolving the problems posed by his increasingly slender popular political base. The sharp deterioration in the living standards of the bulk of the population — real wages have fallen by over 60 per cent in three years and inflation is currently running at over 70 per cent — and the conspicuously growing wealth of the coterie around Denktash (witnessed by the boom in imports of expensive cars and videos), have fuelled considerable resentment. Last December, the threat of yet further hikes in taxation on foodstuffs and basic goods sparked off a successful general strike. But the present retrenchment in Turkish aid — which provides three quarters of the Turkish Cypriot budget — and Denktash's inability to force increases in direct taxation upon his own supporters, suggests that there will be a renewed confrontation with the unions.

The real tragedy of the failure of the UN summit was not only that it pushed the Cyprus problem yet further into the volatile ambit of Graeco-Turkish relations, but also that it poses a direct threat to the human rights of the Turkish Cypriot community. Since the Turkish coup of September 1980, Denktash has been in the habit of denouncing the socialist opposition as 'traitors' and 'enemies of the Motherland' in much the same tones as the military regime in Ankara. □

ALGERIA

STRANGE ALLIANCES

Claudia Wright reports on Algeria's sudden pro-Washington realignment

Washington

IT HAS BEEN the month of the April fools — a time in which the Secretary of State George Shultz confidently told members of Congress: 'Our goals in Central America are like those we had in Vietnam'; and in which former President Nixon reportedly told President Reagan that to cancel his visit to the German military cemetery in Bitburg would undermine his standing in Europe and in the Middle East.

For those abroad who have tied their political survival to the flat world fantasy of Mr Reagan's foreign policy — ex-President Numeiri of Sudan, for example — this should have been the month of awakening. But it was not.

Instead, the President and his advisers have been reinforced in their illusions. They certainly drew comfort from the April visit by President Chadli Benjedid of Algeria. One of the Third World's genuine freedom fighters, a veteran of the bloodiest war of national liberation in the Arab world, and the representative of Algeria's incontestable non-alignment, he chose to use his first visit to Washington to endorse the Reagan Administration's foreign policy at the moment of its most obvious vulnerability.

Ever since US forces landed in Morocco and Algeria in 1942 North Africa has been key to American military thinking. More recently oil and gas from Libya and Algeria were also strategic assets for the US — but only as long as American refiners and East Coast and Midwestern utilities depended on their supply.

Traditional US policy in North Africa has sought to create or preserve pro-American (or at least pro-French) regimes in the region. Algeria has until now resisted because of the legacy of the war against France in which all three presidents, Ahmed Ben Bella, Houari Boumedienne, and Chadli took part. They then turned to Moscow, while Washington armed each of Algeria's neighbours — Morocco, Tunisia and Libya. After the Libyan King Idris was toppled by Gadafy in 1969, the Libyans joined the Algerians in plotting against what was left of the Franco-American condominium.

BY THE TIME Reagan took power, however, one important factor in the strategic equation was changing. The scarce oil and Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) the US had imported was all of a sudden in plentiful supply — a glut, in fact — and the price plummeted. American importers no longer needed either Libyan oil or Algerian gas. Against the former an embargo was declared in March 1982, and in December 1983 Panhandle Eastern Corporation, the major US importer of Algerian LNG, announced it was abrogating its contract. The Algerian government sought Reagan Administration intervention to preserve the contract, but was rebuffed. The potential loss for Algeria runs into several billion dollars.

Freed of the economic pressures that had produced caution in three earlier Administrations, the Reagan government went to war, accelerating the flow of arms to Morocco and Tunisia, and increasing the pressure on Libya. The Algerian government talked tough and threatened retaliation but privately sought political accommodation with Washington. US officials rejected even that and induced King Hassan to refuse the substantial compromises Chadli offered on the Saharawis' behalf to end the long running Sahara war with Morocco.

Nonetheless, the Algerian government was moving slowly towards Washington, and Administration policy would not deter it. The abrupt decision last year by the Moroccan King to sign an agreement with Libya in August reinforced Chadli's new direction. Dismayed that its longtime favourite in the region would embrace its bitterest adversary, the Reagan Administration was happy to manipulate the Algerian move as a warning to Morocco.

At a Congressional hearing just before the Algerian president's arrival, the chair of the House Subcommittee on Africa, Howard Wolpe, reviewed Administration policy in the region. Instead of seeking a negotiated political settlement of the nine-year old war in the Sahara, he said, Morocco had gone on the military offensive. This is turn had led to tensions and military clashes between Moroccan and Algerian troops along their common border. The cost of Morocco's war had pushed its economy further towards bankruptcy, and encouraged Hassan to initiate a rapprochement with Gadafy. 'Would you characterise all of that', Wolpe asked quizzically, 'as a success for American policy?'.

Thomas Nassif, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for the region, relied that he didn't think 'the results in Morocco and the Western Sahara flow from US policy'. Wolpe interrupted. 'Only when (the Administration's) policy works do their results flow from their policy. Is that right?' The official sidestepped the point. From the Administration's point of view, the failures of Moroccan policy are minor by contrast with the significance of the pro-American shift in Algiers. Since Chadli was prepared to make this move, Nassif believed, what reason could there be to doubt the effectiveness of Administration policy?

WHEN CHADLI arrived in Washington, he confirmed how substantial this shift has been. Algerian and US officials had already decided in the preliminary talks not to raise the issue of their differences over the gas contract. When State Department officials were asked about it at the White House, they said it was a purely 'commercial matter' in which the Administration wasn't involved.

Chadli refused even to present Algeria's interpretation of the dispute. On the Arab-Israeli conflict he declined to criticize US policy towards the Palestine Liberation Organisation, and refused to endorse the set of proposals, known as the Fez Plan, which the Arab League drafted in 1982. Even such pro-American Arab leaders as Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak have said more in Washington than this.

The Algerian president chose to emphasise just two points. He was reportedly critical, in his private meetings and public remarks, of Libya and Colonel Gadafy. He was also hostile to King Hassan of Morocco, and to the Hassan-Gadafy agreement. To US officials and members of Congress, the President left the impression he endorsed US attempts to topple Gadafy. Chadli also made it clear that he was interested in buying US weapons.

If it had been the Algerian objective to encourage the Administration towards more productive negotiations on the Sahara war, nothing Chadli actually said had that effect, and there was no sign that, in return for what he did say, there was an American *quid pro quo*. US officials explained later they had no intention of limiting their commitments to Morocco, of putting pressure on King Hassan in the Sahara, or of pursuing a new negotiating initiative. They were willing, they said, to consider an Algerian request for arms — and to that end removed a longstanding embargo on US arms sales to the country — but made no specific offers, either of weapons or credits to pay for them.

When the Algerians decide after 23 years of independence they want to play the old game of weapons diplomacy with an Administration that has exceeded all others in its hostility to Arab concerns, whose indulgence in political fantasy is the greater? The Reagan Administration cannot be faulted for believing the world is flat when long standing critics like the Algerians assure them it is so. □

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REPUBLICAN VALUES

Anne Corbett describes the way in which the Mitterrand government is trying to hijack the tradition of 'the Republic'

Paris

THE FRENCH Minister of Education, Jean-Pierre Chevènement announced last week — with very evident pleasure — a new move to strengthen the 'republican' element in French schooling. Children in primary schools will once again have a fixed timetable, systematic teaching of French history and civic education and they must all learn the national anthem, the *Marseillaise*.

The attempt to turn the clock back to the 1890s highlights another issue in the run-up to next March's legislative elections in France. It does not have the constitutionally explosive potential of the situation created by the former Prime Minister, Raymond Barre, who has said that it should be unthinkable for a victorious Right (a likely event) to serve under the Socialist President, Francois Mitterrand. He, unlike the other right-wing leaders, Valery Gisgard d'Estaing and Jacques Chirac, would refuse. Barre, taking a high-handed attitude to the constitution of the Fifth Republic, thinks the president should resign.

The Chevènement policy will, the government expects, get public approval. This is in contrast to the recent bill to introduce proportional representation.

Although it could be argued that such voting reform is potentially more 'democratic', in fact it will actually be more helpful to the big parties, notably the Socialists and Chirac's RPR, than the small ones. It also makes impossible any future 'Union of the Left'.

But in appealing to the 'national memory', Chevènement is part of a tradition which the French work assiduously to maintain. There are phases when the memory is seen as collective; others when the group is more important. When municipalities change hands, so do some of the street names. When the government changed in 1981 so did the design on French postage stamps (out went the Rape of the Sabines, in came Delacroix's 'Liberty guiding the people').

MITTERRAND himself did a tour of the Pantheon the day he was installed as President to remind the nation that it had left-wing heroes. He has such a consistent record of appealing to republican values that back in 1965, when as a member of the tiny UDSR (Union Démocratique et Socialiste de la Résistance) he first stood as a presidential candidate, he was roundly told off by André Malraux: 'You are the only candidate of the republic. Let the republic lie down and sleep.'

In the initial élan of 1981, when Pierre Mauroy was Prime Minister, those like him who had come to politics through working-class cultural movements set the style for reviving the memories of socialism in terms of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity and the *front populaire*. But preferred historical references, like economic policy under Mitterrand, have also moved in search of the centre. Hence it is now the Republic rather than the Revolution to which French Ministers appeal. In the memory of the Left the Republic exudes civic virtue as well as patriotism, the one constitutional system to have given France democracy, ultimately triumphing against the monarchy, the Church and later the collaborationist wartime government of Vichy.

Paradoxically, the success of Mitterrand's Prime Minister Laurent Fabius highlights the need, not just to boost *La France*, but to find a leftish form of nationalism. Every time Fabius finishes one of his monthly televised homilies his ratings with the public go up. An enviable 67 per cent of the population approve of him. But is is something of an electoral handicap if there is nothing to distinguish his style from the right's self-centred liberalism. As a contributor to the socialist review *Intervention* suggested recently, he needs the toga of republican respectability. The current pragmatism is too close to ideological nakedness.

THE ATTEMPT to monopolise the idea is, however, ambiguous. Percipiently, and for the socialists somewhat perversely, Pierre Nora, one of the band of famous French historians, has just innovated a fascinating exploration of the gap between group memories of the Republic and historical reality. His contributors*, looking at 'monuments' as varied as the Pantheon and the *Marseillaise*, are describing the process which Eric Hobsbawm has called 'the invention of tradition'. There are remarkably few cases in which the emotive symbolism of the Left has become part of the national memory. New regimes, and France has known many, have always appealed to a conveniently tailored past to uphold their legitimacy and that has meant an appeal to consensus.

As Nora makes clear, time has shifted the notion of the Republic to the right. The republican left is responsible for cowardice and worse. He quotes Munich, the Spanish Civil War, and the Fourth Republic's acceptance of torture in the Algerian war (when Mitterrand was Minister of the Interior). The republican ideal has also become an integral part of the right's ideology, largely in association with General de Gaulle. Their symbols and memories include marches up the Champs Elysée at the Liberation and in 1968, and de Gaulle's address to the nation from the Place de la Republique in the face of the Left's assertions that he was plotting to be either a dictator or monarch.

De Gaulle by his success — and Vichy by its failure — between them exorcised the idea that the Right had to be anti-republican. At the same time the decline of the French Communist Party weakens the hold of aggressively left-wing republicanism. The peaceful transfer of power to Mitterrand, a faithful supporter of 'republican values' (but formerly a virulent opponent of the Fifth Republic's presidential bias) merely emphasises, says Nora, that the Republic is now such an integral fact of French life that appeals to its values are almost meaningless.

The findings of a recent poll on attitudes to the Republic support him. What is not in doubt is the majority of French people do not see Mitterrand and his party as the ones who have kept the vision of the Republic intact. It is Raymond Barre who most epitomises it among living politicians: the very same Raymond Barre who now appears to be trying to provoke a crisis in the life of the Republic. The coming months will reveal whether that poll was an omen. □

'Liberty guiding the people': Delacroix goes onto Socialist postage stamps

Les Lieux de memoire, sous la direction de Pierre Nora. Tome 1 La République. Editions Gallimard 1984, 300 francs. To follow: *La Nation* (2 vols) and *Les France*.

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LETTERS

What you forgot, Frances

Roger Kline, Birmingham

Frances Morrell's article on 'the state of the British Left' (*NS* 26 April) is remarkable not for what it says but for what it doesn't.

There is no mention of the miners' strike and its effects. No discussion of the precarious state of working-class organisations at the workplace and in the community. No mention of the huge numbers of people — especially young people — totally oblivious to any 'strategy' we on the Left may cook up which does not relate to their immediate situation. No mention of the unemployed, or the half million or so on government 'training' and 'job creation' schemes. No mention of the peace movement. No mention, indeed, of any political discussion or activity outside the Labour Party.

Socialism is not simply about equality, social justice or an irreversible shift of power and wealth. It is about working-class people *themselves* changing society and, in the process, all our ways of thinking and behaving. Any socialist strategy that doesn't take that as its starting point will flounder. It will, moreover, fail to connect with the everyday struggles and existence that most people live, far removed from socialist discussion.

Different struggles — whether by dinner women, hospital workers, peace campaigners, miners, local communities, black people or YTS trainees — should be our starting point. If they are not, they inevitably get lost in the quest for the Holy Grail of electoral success. And if those struggles get lost, then so does the socialist movement.

Don't blame the Beeb

Norman Buchan MP, Labour Arts spokesperson

Just a footnote on your piece on the Gowrie saga (*NS* 19 April). Don't blame Manchester BBC. On the contrary, Manchester BBC are the only ones who have come out with some credit. What Lord Gowrie was wanting them to do was to have a *second* separate interview in addition to the existing tape which they were broadcasting. This they flatly refused to do, and they put out the following statement:

> Arts Minister, Lord Gowrie, did agree to take part in the discussion which now follows, but pulled out at a late stage. A spokeswoman in his office said the minister was not willing to get involved in what she called a 'slanging match' and would only take part in Newsfile if he could be interviewed separately, on his own. This was a condition we could not accept, and we regret his absence.

What shall we do with the Royals?

Leslie Moody, London SE3

The most apt comment on Phillip Hall's defence of his part in the Princess Michael affair (*NS* 26 April) was surely your editorial in the previous week's issue: 'When those on the Left call for inquiries into this "appalling public scandal", they are playing the Conservative establishment game.' What have his efforts achieved? Certainly nothing to comfort those of us who wish to keep alive memories of SS barbarities. It was entirely predictable that a wave of public sympathy for the Princess would follow the revulsion that many felt for the *Mirror*'s cynical exploitation of the story. Some harboured the, no doubt unworthy, thought that Mr Hall's interest in the matter was not unconnected with the fact that the advance publicity would do no harm to the sales of his forthcoming book.

As for the *Mirror* itself, a bit of dirt on the Royal Family was perhaps calculated to pull the paying customers in quicker than Bingo. What is much more alarming is that sympathy for the Princess is now being translated into sympathy for the late von Reibnitz, exemplified by the preposterous suggestion that he was only an 'honorary' member of the SS.

As your editorial was at pains to warn us, the Left must get clear where it stands on the monarchy. You don't have to be a raving monarchist to understand that the Labour Party would want its head examined if it made the monarchy an election issue. What we can do is to understand that the Royals' role is purely representational and that this gives us a right to be interested in their public appearances and public statements. The moment we show an interest, whether benign or malevolent, in their *private* lives we are playing the game of those who wish to elevate their role into something much more substantial and much more problematical for a future socialist government.

One person on the buses

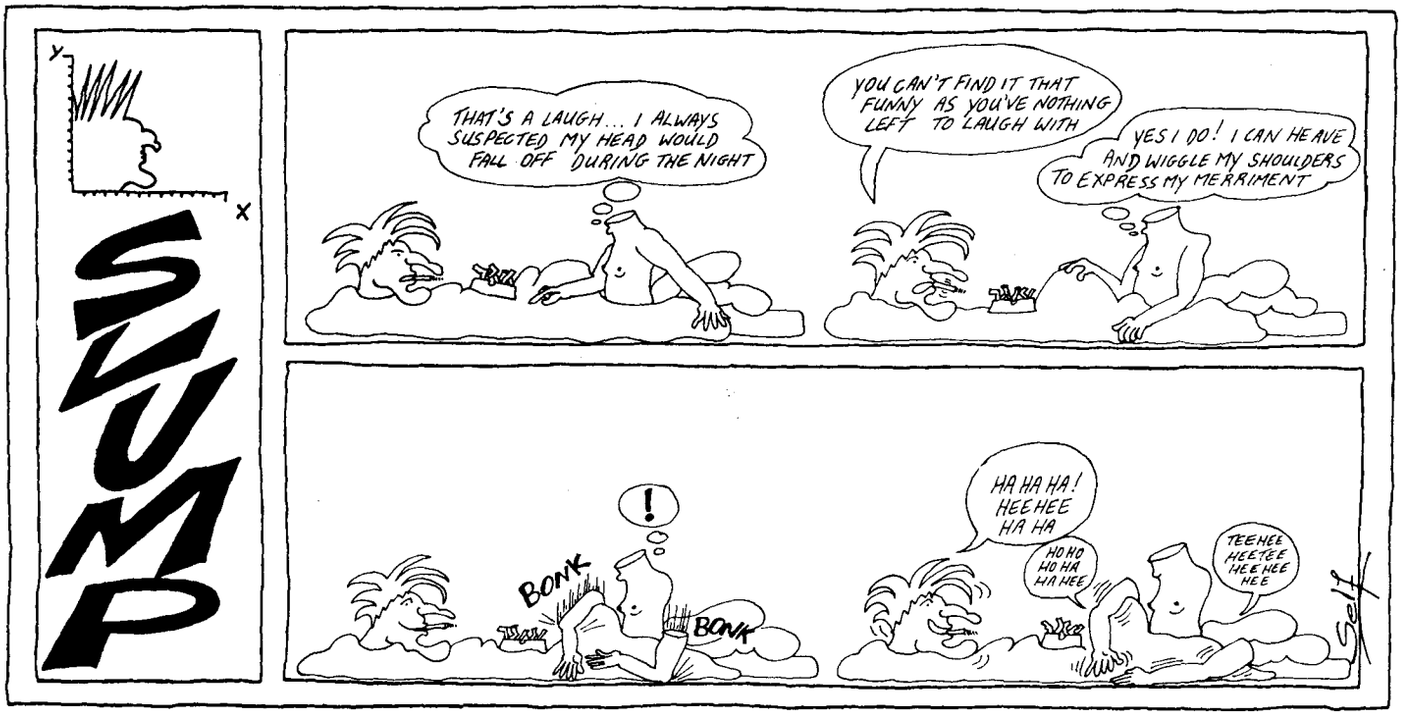
Dave Wetzel, Chair of GLC Transport Committee

I fully endorse Mick Hamer's response (Letters 19 April) to John Telford Beasley's comments on LRT's policy to increase One Person Operation (OPO) on their buses. I would add the following additional points.

Mr Beasley cites the attitude studies referred to in the report on OPO by Oxford University. Although, as he says, passengers state a strong resistance to playing higher fares to retain conductors, he fails to point out that there was an even stronger resistance to the extension of OPO, when the issue of increased unemployment was added to the lower fares versus conductors argument. Mick Hamer's view that OPO is unpopular is clearly supported by the conclusions of the Oxford Study, where Dr Goodwin states 'OPO is seen as part of an increasingly unattractive aspect of declining quality of service'.

Mr Beasley's cynical concern for his staff is self-evident. Rather than try to make conductors less vulnerable to assault, he wants to get rid of their jobs altogether and blandly states that LRT are 'only too pleased if conductors seek to retrain as drivers'. What he forgets to say is that conductors over 30 years of age have only a 23 per cent chance of being accepted, those over 40, 9 per cent and those over 50 only 4 per cent. At all ages, women have 25 per cent less chance of passing than men.

His final point about 100 per cent OPO theoretically saving £25 million ignores many facts. If the *total* costs to the public are counted, including lost tax income and increased Social Security payments, there is a net loss to the public purse of any further OPO operated routes. ▷


SLUMP
THAT'S A LAUGH... I ALWAYS SUSPECTED MY HEAD WOULD FALL OFF DURING THE NIGHT
YOU CAN'T FIND IT THAT FUNNY AS YOU'VE NOTHING LEFT TO LAUGH WITH
YES I DO! I CAN HEAVE AND WIGGLE MY SHOULDERS TO EXPRESS MY MERRIMENT
!
BONK
BONK
HA HA HA! HEE HEE HA HA
HO HO HO HA HA HEE
TEE HEE HEE TEE HEE HEE HEE
Self

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Increasing OPO to 65 per cent in total (LRT's current plans) will cost the public an extra £5 million a year for a worse service. Furthermore, in their programme of evaluation of new bus types, LRT are only testing OPO-type buses. If they really do not have a policy of converting all routes to OPO, why is no attempt being made to find a suitable replacement crew-operated bus?

When the government took London Transport over from the GLC they said it was time to stop political interference and let professional managers manage. There is now only one transport professional on the LRT board of 11 members.

Helping Sikhs?

Indarjit Singh, Editor, The Sikh Messenger

Congratulations to the *New Statesman* and your columnists, Amiya Rao and Amrit Wilson, for drawing the West's attention to the mass killing of thousands of Sikhs in Delhi and its shameful aftermath (*NS* 12 April).

This massacre of thousands of innocent members of a tiny 2 per cent minority is undoubtedly one of the most appalling episodes in a century of violence. In Germany, the Nazis incinerated their victims *after* killing them; in Delhi, the common method of killing Sikh men and boys was to douse them with kerosene or petrol and burn them alive in front of their terrified and grief-stricken womenfolk, with the police either silent spectators or active participants.

Your correspondents rightly draw attention to the shameful abdication of responsibility shown by an Indian government ever-ready to lecture other nations on human rights. Widows, traumatised beyond belief by their experience, are made to undergo severe and insensitive bureaucratic harassment and very few have received any compensation whatsoever despite Indian government propaganda to the contrary. Even worse, unable or unwilling to do anything themselves, the government is shamefully claiming credit for the relief, rehabilitation and financial assistance provided by other, mainly Sikh, organisations such as the Delhi Gurdwara Parbanakh Committee (see Letters 19 April).

Two facts show the true nature of the Indian government's attitude. The level of compensation 'promised' to Sikh widows is one thousandth of that sought for the victims of the Bhopal tragedy. Even more revealing is the government's description of its now promised inquiry as a 'major concession' to Sikh demands. Surely it is a normal function of government to inquire into any unlawful killing, let alone the massacre of thousands. Why should Sikhs have to fight for and demand that which should be the right of every citizen of a civilised nation?

Now out — *Striking Back*

Philip Thomas, Welsh Campaign for Civil and Political Liberties

The Welsh Campaign for Civil and Political Liberties wishes to apologise for the delay to those readers who sent donations and book orders for *Striking Back*. Despite massive increases in production costs we are still able to sell the book at £2.75. This is due in part to the generous support and donations from *New Statesman* readers throughout the world.

There were major printing delays but the book was launched on 23 April and already there is a considerable demand for this account of the struggle of the South Wales mining communities. All profits will go to alleviate distress in these communities. Copies (£3 including p+p) available from WCCPL, 13 Dogo Street, Pontcanna, Cardiff.

FEEDBACK

A touch of class

BEN FINE's attempt to explain 'class politics' raises a number of issues (*NS* 19 April). There is not the space here to dispute his assertion that the miners' strike was lost simply because the Labour leadership had not 'thrown its full weight behind the miners'; more sophisticated views have already been aired on this topic in the *New Statesman*.

I shall also avoid the temptation to contest statements such as Labour did not grow because 'it neither led nor supported the unions even in their limited conflicts against the loss of jobs and living standards in the crises of the seventies'. And as for 'We would argue, however, that both the greater fragmentation and the greater status of the women's movement illustrate the failure of the Labour Party to move forward, relating the movement's current demands to a class-based strategy' — enough said.

The merit in Ben Fine's piece, however, is that he gets close to stating what 'class politics' actually means. We are told that the 'politics of the GLC are intimately bound up with the politics of class'. But what, precisely, is the point being made? Precisely in what way does the GLC evoke the idea of 'class politics'? These questions are not answered directly but the real content of 'class politics' is implied in an argument along the following lines:

a) Localised actions, such as by the GLC, will shortly come 'smack up against' the limits of their powers 'posed by central government'.

b) We need 'national programmes of action' to defeat 'the entrenched class interests of (multinational) capital'.

c) A local socialist project 'could only be part of a national scheme and its success would depend on comprehensive planning rather than the lead being taken by market forces'.

Note, incidentally, that in this section the word 'national' is mentioned more often that 'class'. If local struggles are so limited, and capital is 'multinational', then how can a purely 'national' strategy be adequate? Ben Fine either has to concede that significant and lasting advances can be made at a local level, despite a very hostile Tory government, or he should join those on the far Left who see the only way forward as simultaneous revolution on a world scale.

The implication, however, is that 'class politics' amounts to the assertion of the need for nationwide action, national planning and national public ownership. These (among others) are worthy aims. But why insist on calling them 'class politics'? Why is 'class politics' identified with a form of property relations, and nationalisation in particular? Why not call it 'nationalisation politics'? These are questions which above all others deserve answers.

Ben Fine's unquestioning stance on these matters derives from elements of the Marxist-Leninist tradition. One reason why Marxism holds some attraction is its combination of a theory of history based on the changing positions of social classes with the idea that the working class is the key agency in the transition to socialism. Theory and strategy are thus combined. However, neither the writings of Marx nor Lenin show any detailed plan of definition of the socialist goal; other than to equate it with the triumph of the 'proletariat' in the class battle.

This puts the whole theoretical structure into question.* Marx simply assumes, he does not demonstrate, that socialism and the final victory of the 'working class' in their struggle are one and the same thing. Of course it should be emphasised that socialism is inconceivable without majority support. And if we are in a developed capitalist country that majority is bound to be working-class.

But does that mean that the establishment of socialism and the elevation of the working class are *conceptually* the same thing? It does not, and no Marxist since the publication of the *Communist Manifesto* has given one good reason why we should regard them as the same.

The consequences of this error are legion. Marx projects a view that 'the victory of the proletariat' is equivalent to the collectivisation of ownership on a national scale. In the *Communist Manifesto* Marx and Engels assert that production should be organised as 'a vast association of the whole nation'. Since 1917 this has been widely interpreted as nationalisation. A more pluralistic and decentralised socialist economy, as supported by Solidarnosc in Poland, is thus denied.

Should we regard the Soviet Union as a variety of socialist system? Marx gives us no clear criterion upon which we can decide. If nationalisation is the foremost and fundamental issue then it follows that the Soviet Union should be described as the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' or a 'workers' state'. But how strange it is to so describe a system where working-class people are almost entirely denied access to political and even free trade union power!

The absence of democracy strangely does not figure in such a verdict on the 'class character' of the system. The exclusion of democracy, however defined, from the definition of 'class politics' is as arbitrary as the inclusion of nationalisation. It is notable and symptomatic that Ben Fine does not give democracy a mention.

The conceptual identification of socialism with 'the working class organised as a ruling class' narrows socialist politics down to the 'class struggle'. Thus the occurrence of a strike, or the existence of unrestrained 'free collective bargaining', are regarded almost universally, and without reservation, as positive events for the socialist cause. The importance of projecting a clear, feasible and above all democratic conception of a socialist society, and of prefiguring this in practice at a local level, are pushed to one side.

I am not suggesting that the concepts of 'class' or 'class struggle' should be abandoned. They retain an enormous theoretical and practical relevance. What has to go is the shibboleth of 'class politics' and the idea that politics in a complex capitalist society is like two football teams, where the loss of one is automatically the other's gain. And there is no earthly reason why we should define the victory of one team simply as public ownership and planning on a national scale.

Geoff Hodgson

*This point is developed further in Ch. 12 of my recent book *The Democratic Economy* (Penguin, 1984). See also A. Gorz, *Farewell to the Working Class* (Pluto, 1982) Ch. 1.

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Frank C. Dougherty/NYT Pictures

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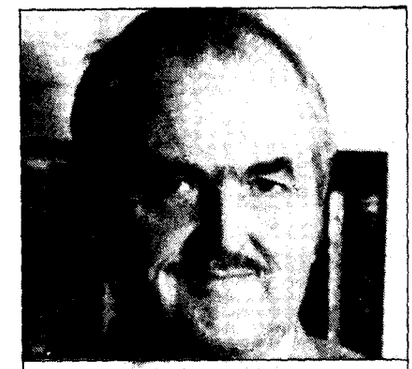

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DRAMA IN THE HISTORY DEPARTMENT

Allegations of fraud and persecution are stirring the world of America's historians, occasioned by one book on the Weimar Republic. Jane Caplan and Jon Wiener unravel the story and explain the sensitivity of the issues at stake

AN UNUSUALLY bittter academic dispute has been disturbing the American historical profession for the past two years. It has led to charges of a McCarthyite witch hunt from one side, and accusations of an academic Watergate cover-up from the other.

At the centre of the storm is a young marxist historian from Princeton University, David Abraham, whose book *The Collapse of the Weimar Republic* (Princeton University Press, 1981) has been found to contain a number of mistakes. Against him are ranged two senior historians, Henry Turner of Yale and Gerald Feldman of Berkeley, both of them published specialists in the field of German economic and political history. Turner has accused Abraham of fabricating evidence; Feldman's charges against him include fraudulent scholarship and misrepresentation of others' work. This isn't the first scholarly dispute in history to have turned vicious, but it is also more than simply another academic debate. Feldman and Turner have been seeking not just to expose Abraham's errors, but also to make sure that he will never get another job. Suggestions have been made that his publishers should withdraw his book, and even that the University of Chicago should rescind his PhD.

The book that has aroused this extraordinary campaign is a study of economic interests and political conflicts in Weimar Germany — that fragile episode of parliamentary democracy between the end of the First World War and the Nazi seizure of power. The Weimar Republic's brevity and instability — it lasted a bare 14 years — have long fascinated historians, American and European. Thousands of essays and monographs have advanced all kinds of explanations for its collapse, invoking everything from defects of the German character to the effects of the Versailles Treaty.

Above left: David Abraham; centre; Hitler with Hindenberg, 1923; above right Henry Turner; below right Gerald Feldman

Fundamental to the many tensions that wracked the republic, and central in many explanations of its downfall, was the conflict between industry and labour. Both were highly organised in Germany, although, as Abraham points out, not as monolithic blocs. The working classes were politically divided between social democracy and communism, the economically dominant classes fragmented between different interests in agriculture and industry — peasant and Junker farmers, domestic and export industries, and so on.

Abraham's main concern is to unravel and explain the precise way in which economic interests were translated into political agendas. He shows how the economically dominant classes bought co-operation with capitalism at the price of a costly compromise with labour, paid out in the social and welfare policies adopted by the German parliament and financed by taxation which, in the crisis of the depression, generated an intolerable profit squeeze. Put crudely, Abraham's argument is then that Germany's dominant classes used the depression to force a dissolution of the stalemate between capital and labour, and that they were not particular as to their allies. In the final analysis, the Weimar Republic was

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destroyed by a wilful coalition between the old dominant classes and the only political movement capable of generating the mass support required — the Nazi Party.

The account of this presented by Abraham is largely structural in approach: he discusses the generation and interrelation of economic interests, the problems of class conflict and political bloc-building. His book is an inquiry into the potential and actual conditions of stability and breakdown in Weimar Germany, rather than a narrative account of the actions and motives of leading personalities, far less an analysis of the Nazi rise to power; at the same time, it is based on extensive archival research. Indeed, his book has been widely praised as an ambitious attempt to combine the methods of empirical research with a theoretical sophistication unusual among historians. It was this boldness that first earned him a teaching job and the prospect of tenure; its results then incited the assault on the book's method and veracity.

Nazis and big business

Abraham's critics have focussed their outrage almost exclusively on those parts of his research which concern the contacts between big business and Hitler in the last years of the republic. In doing so, they have missed the point of his book, but they have instead hit a target guaranteed to incite maximum passion: the relationship between Nazism and capitalism.

The core of the charges levelled against Abraham is that he has systematically and deliberately misrepresented the degree of collusion between German business owners and the Nazi Party, in order to sustain the old *canard* that German industry was responsible for and welcomed the success of the Nazis. Turner, at first in privately circulated letters and then in a communication published in October 1983 in the profession's leading journal, the *American Historical Review*, alleged that Abraham had fabricated a document showing the support of business owners for Hitler and his political allies in the last years of Weimar.

Abraham felt obliged to return to the West German archives to check his sources, and he found the document whose existence was contested. It had no signature, and an imprecise date — a not uncommon problem for historians. Abraham conceded in his *American Historical Review* response to Turner that his dating and attribution had been erroneous, and he offered a fresh appraisal of both. Unfortunately, this reappraisal itself missed certain points, and left the document still open to dispute.

Although Abraham had successfully defended himself against the grave charge of fabrication — which incidentally Turner has never retracted or apologised for — his response now drew upon himself the fire of Feldman. No doubt partly because he had originally (though with reservations) recommended Abraham's manuscript for publication, Feldman now proved himself an implacable antagonist of the book and its author. Since the end of 1983 he has devoted enormous time to and risked his professional reputation in trying to destroy Abraham's career, accusing him of purveying 'lies and misinformation' and calling his book a 'menace to other scholars'.

BBC Hulton Picture Library

1920s unemployment march protests the wealth of aristocrats

As Princeton historian Carl Schorske remarks, '[Abraham's critics] are not saying "Here's a serious error"; they're saying, "Here's a lie, and I'll tell you why this guy lies".' In accusing Abraham of fraud, his critics imply that he had to fabricate documents and systematically misconstrue evidence because his marxist interpretation could not be sustained by the truth. Abraham concedes he did make mistakes; as well as misdating and misattributing one document, he mistranslated another in a way that distorted its meaning, and treated a paraphrase of a third document as a quotation.

American universities put junior faculty under immense pressure to produce books, but Feldman rejects haste as an explanation. However, Lawrence Stone, another eminent historian at Princeton, disputes Feldman's claim that good historians don't make mistakes, especially in archival research. 'When you work in the archives', he says, 'you're far from home, you're bored, you're in a hurry, you're scribbling like crazy. You're bound to make mistakes. I don't believe any scholar in the Western world has impeccable footnotes. Archival research is a special case of the general messiness of life.'

Historians' risks

Many historians would agree with that. The fluent and persuasive accounts of historical events that reach the printed page are often the results of long hours of tussling with an intractably incomplete and inconsistent historical record, composed not of smoothly interlocking letters and memoranda, but of fragments, false starts, lost trails, misplaced documents, indecipherable notations, tedious and misleading exchanges. Of course, it is a fundamental part of the historian's duty to handle these problems, to know how to interpret every kind of document, to judge a writer's standpoint, to use the evidence when it is there and to refuse to invent it if it isn't.

But accepting the necessary conditions of using the documentary record should

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not mean slavishly capitulating to its limitations, far less fetishising its sanctity. Historians must use written evidence, and must do so with care and precision. But if we never 'went beyond' the documents, if we never construed missing connections, guessed at probable authorship, calculated a missing date, the historical enterprise as it has developed since the 19th century would simply not exist. Inventing or suppressing documentary evidence is never to be condoned; but extracting an interpretation in the light of the historian's hypothesis rather than the document's contents alone is a necessary part of the process of writing history as opposed to chronicling events.

Nonetheless, Feldman's self-arrogated duty of alerting American universities to the menace in their midst has, he claims, succeeded in denying Abraham employment. Although supported by his own department, Abraham was eventually turned down for tenure at Princeton by the administration, and began his search for a new job at the end of 1983. It was then that Feldman began his campaign of unsolicited phone calls and letters to make sure that no university hired Abraham, and backed this by circulating 'Dear Colleague' letters to numerous other historians in America and Europe. 'I am pleased to say', says Feldman in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 'I was directly or indirectly involved in stopping four places from hiring Abraham.' And he goes on, 'As long as there is one qualified historian in his field who does not have a job, I do not think David Abraham deserves a place in the profession.'

The political motivations and implications of this continuing story are far from transparent. Lawrence Stone has said 'I've never seen a witch hunt like this in 40 years in two countries', while his colleague Natalie Zemon Davis says she has seen something like it before: 'In some ways it's reminiscent of McCarthyite hysteria.' Equally, a panel on the affair at the Socialist Scholars' conference in New York in April was uncertain about how to read the political significance of the case.

Perhaps what emerges most clearly is the division within the history profession between old-fashioned empiricists and more adventurous interpretive historians, by no means all marxists. What really incited Abraham's critics was the fact that he placed an empirically-researched account of the politics of big business within the framework of a highly sophisticated marxist theory of politics in a capitalist society. In effect, he demonstrated the plausibility of a marxist interpretation of Weimar history by means of empirical evidence — something that Turner is on record as believing to be impossible. As Geoff Eley, historian of Germany at the University of Michigan, comments: 'Whatever the final verdict on the book's errors and their source, its importance in translating discussion of these matters onto a much higher level has to be forthrightly upheld. The unwillingness of Abraham's critics to engage with these matters has been both puzzling and regrettable.'

Abraham himself sees his book as a case-study in the structural problems of capitalist democracy, squeezed between the imperatives of capitalist profitability and the demands for social expenditures to mitigate the effects of capitalism's own economic unevenness. His model is clearly marxist, but it rests neither on crude determinism nor on the 'I paid Hitler' versions of industrial support for the NSDAP. Instead, he has drawn on a new body of marxist theoretical literature which eschews the simplified concept that the political superstructure 'reflects' the economic base, and has instead sought to analyse the subtler forms in which in practice economic structures, ideological hegemony and political rule are sustained (or overthrown).

Abraham cites both older classics by the Italian marxist Gramsci and the more recent work by the French theorist Nicos Poulantzas. Indeed, his book is one of the few historical fruits of this theoretical renaissance, and effectively puts marxist political history onto a new plane.

This demands from anti-marxist historians a comparable elevation of their critical sights — a challenge to which it appears that Turner at least does not wish to rise. His own study published earlier this year, *German Big Business and the Rise of Hitler* (OUP), continues to treat marxist theory and history as an indistinguishable bloc of dogma stretching from the 1930s to the present day. His diatribe has thus failed to hit the mark.

For his part, Feldman (whose views are finally to be made public in a lengthy exchange in the journal *Central European History* later this year) lacks Turner's extreme anti-marxism, but emulates his suspicion of anything but the empirical demonstrations of actions and motives as evidence for historical causation. In this debate, both historians have refused to consider the problem of relationships between structure and action, between determination and contingency, that has been a commonplace of mainstream work in the social sciences since Weber, if not Marx. They appear to be — like Britain's own Geoffrey Elton — dedicated to manning (*sic*) the barricades erected between history and the other social sciences, committed to securing the impermeability of 'the queen of disciplines' to the pollutions of lesser intellectual pursuits.

Odious association

It is hard to understand why what would have been just another bout between practitioners of different historical methodologies has been inflamed into scandal. But the debate has some wider resonances, even if — such are the ironies of history — these are unintended by the protagonists. First of all, it is doubtful that the case would have become so public — with articles in the *New York Times* and *Time* magazine — had it turned on events less prominent in the American public mind than the rise of National Socialism.

For many Americans, National Socialism means above all the Holocaust. Every contribution to the history of modern Germany is potentially part of the chronicle of this monstrous and uniquely execrated event. To associate businessmen — those heroes of American society — with National Socialism is to imply some association between capitalism and genocide, an association odious and inconceivable to most Americans.

In addition, the imputation of error in explaining National Socialism (even though this is not the focus of Abraham's book) carries with it the suggestion of a special sin of falsification, and a depreciation of the suffering of its victims. Such an implication is particularly inappropriate since Abraham is the son of Auschwitz survivors and dedicated the book to his parents.

More generally, the primarily political and motivational interpretation of history espoused by critics of Abraham's methodology carries lessons for the present. If this explains the conflicts of the past, if the rules of evidence impose such narrow limits, then the conflicts of the present are caught within the same straitjacket. Socio-structural tensions and economic interests can be discounted as causes; international contention becomes a matter of strategy and power-play, internal disorders the fruits of subversion and ambition.

Finally, the Abraham case is indicative of the lack of political engagement in American universities today. If the campuses were less quiet, there might have been more open protest at this unparalleled example of victimization. But students are concerned more about grades and jobs, faculty and administrators about tenure, enrolments and finance. There is much timidity and little passion. What might once have been a political rallying-cry has remained something else: an in-turned scholarly dispute, and an individual calamity. □

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Dogged hope

Jonathan Hugh-Jones

Weakness and Deceit: US Policy in El Salvador
RAYMOND BONNER *Hamish Hamilton* £13.95
Out of the Ashes
War on Want/ESCHR/GCHR £2.50

I WAS IN Los Angeles last month and dutifully cut out anything the press reported on Central America. By the end of one week I had a large pile; some articles ran over three pages. If it used to be the case that Americans knew little and cared less, times are changing.

But what exactly do they know? Raymond Bonner, a *New York Times* correspondent, sets out with dreadful clarity how the government have tried to dupe everyone, and principally themselves, as to what goes on down there. When their own embassy reported the truth of massacres in El Salvador, they got ticked off. When their own Human Rights Bureau sent in memoranda they were not even stamped as having been officially received. When Bonner requests documents under the Freedom of Information Act, they 'cannot be traced'. Reagan conceals the truth from everyone, schoolchildren to Congress, while his staff briskly rewrite history.

Contrast the finicky exactitude of the guerrillas' Radio Venceremos reporter: 'If we report that we took twenty rifles and the soldiers know it was only fifteen,...they won't believe our other reports. Inaccurate reports are bad for morale.'

Throughout the US opposition there's terrible weariness — Senators with their hearts in the right place asking the right embarrassing questions but never pressing the advantage home. And we can see why. A senior embassy official remarks, 'What would it matter if D'Aubuisson had pulled the trigger on Archbishop Romero? Our policy wouldn't change.'

Bonner's thesis is that the policy might just as well change, since he sees the US as humiliated by its political impotence, its inability to obtain even the appearance of justice for murdered Americans, let alone peasants. 'Congress says one more massacre and no more aid. That was ten massacres ago.'

The Vietnam echoes come thick and fast. 'The Gang that Blew Vietnam Goes Latin' the *Washington Post* sniped at Reagan's team. Bonner is not the first Vietnam vet to report interference in El Salvador with disgust. But he documents brilliantly how wonky the lessons learnt have been. The star pupils are the Salvadoran military. Torture? 'Uh, well, the same thing you did in Vietnam. We learned from you the means, like blowtorches in the armpits, shots in the balls...'

The children of El Salvador, meanwhile, are in no doubt as to who's responsible for their suffering. In *Out of the Ashes*, published by a consortium of human rights campaigners, a refugee child writes thus:

> The government of Ronanrrigan (*sic*) said to go and massacre everyone and the military want to do for all the peasant people in the villages...but some people ran away to other countries and nothing's happened to them 'cos they're lucky.

Lucky maybe, but if Reagan really wants to reward doggedness in the face of adversity, here are his prizewinners. Briefly describing the slaughter that drove them over borders, the book concentrates on reconstruction, on what these Salvadorans and Guatemalans are doing to rebuild their lives and societies. Some have been luckier than others; in Nicaragua, refugees are quickly dispersed from the reception centres, settled on good land in cooperatives and given legal rights equal to Nicaraguans'. In Honduras, Colomoncagua camp is neat and trim but overcrowded and sometimes bitterly cold. This is a community without adult men — they're either dead or back in El Salvador fighting. Other refugees have found their way as far as Washington, perhaps 80,000 of them, illegal and vulnerable, some of whom helped make Uncle Ronnie's birthday cake. It is these 'invisibles' that are the hardest to assist.

In the camps their problems are far from over. The Mexican and Costa Rican governments are grudging, the UNHCR erratic in its assistance. But the refugees farm, build and organise whatever they can. There are schools, workshops for embroidery, leather and tin work, pottery and mechanics, committees overseeing sanitation and water supplies, libraries and news-sheets. There is even, in Nicaragua, a Refugee Mental Health Collective which produces booklets on how to cope with the depression that inevitably overwhelms them.

Their home lives cannot be recreated, but then they may not want that.

> In El Salvador agriculture was on an individual basis because we used to grow vegetables just for ourselves and not to share with the community.... Here in the camps the agriculture belongs to the community, there is no intention of exploiting others. That is the progress we have made.

So says the Colomoncagua camp bulletin. And when they do it for themselves they generally do it better. A large UNHCR farm 'was not a success. The refugees were expected to slot into an ambitious and complicated agricultural project rather than developing their own small-scale cooperatives.'

Absurdly, infuriatingly, even as this book is published there is an agreement afoot between the Salvadoran and Honduran governments for 'voluntary' repatriation of the refugees to 'model' villages — complete with grid layouts and guardposts — financed by USAID.

Out of the Ashes is splendidly illustrated with photographs, drawings and songs by the refugees; the impression is of an inspiring resilience. And one picture is of a photography class for children. The Nicaragua Media Project, raising money to send photographic supplies, was something else I discovered in Los Angeles last month. Left in peace the refugees might be producing books like this themselves soon — let's hope they find an audience as wide as that for Bonner and the *New York Times*. □

Piers Cavendish/Reflex

Colomoncagua camp in Honduras: the adult men are 'either dead or in El Salvador fighting'

Missing links

Sara Maitland

A Father's Diary
FRASER HARRISON *Flamingo* £2.95

IN 1975 FRASER HARRISON left his publishing job in London and, with his new wife, went to live in the Suffolk countryside where she farms a smallholding and he is a full-time writer. They have two children, a boy and a girl; and he has written a diary about them,

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and about himself as their father, running from May to May the year that they became four and five respectively. The months are important, from spring to spring; Harrison is a conservationist and 'nature lover' and the annual rhythm obviously matters to him and to his sense of parenting.

Well, for some years now many sections of the Women's Movement have been urging that fathers get more involved in the up-bringing of their children: both in the practicalities of it and in the emotional webs that caring for small children weave. Why should it be so infuriating when they do? The 'househusband' has become a stock figure for self-mockery among the liberal middle classes (cf Posy Simmonds), but Harrison quite delicately avoids self-satire, excessive self-consciousness — even though he is open about the fact that from the start he intended the diary for publication. Nor is he know-it-all or superior; he is not advocating a special child rearing method; he obviously likes his children and is involved with them sincerely (though actually it would be useful if he had given more background information. For example, amid all his troubles and strifes he never seems to mind about eating habits — is this because he never cooks or shops for the food his children won't eat? The washing machine never breaks down and his working day is never interrupted. In this case the diary — supposedly the most revealing of forms — actually obscures certain important structures because it need never take an overview of the pattern of family life.)

So whence my irritation? Is it, perhaps, because if a woman had written this book it would not have been blurbed as 'original and brilliant' but sold — if at all — in instalments in a women's magazine — where I am certain it would have given joy and reassurance to other parents: this is not a put-down, just an observation on the value placed on women's experience. But this would not be fair to Harrison; the book is 'original' precisely because few fathers, certainly of those who write so well, do bother to direct their skills in this direction; it was probably a brave and certainly a useful thing to do.

I certainly hope that my twitchiness does not come from the fact that he enjoys his children so much, and knows his privilege in having so much time with them in the country. I do not want men to *not enjoy* their children as much as so many women are forced to do. The idea behind involving men more in child-care is to increase the amount of enjoyment all round, not to wreak vengeance on the male sex by sentencing them to years of penal servitude.

I think my irritation comes from two major omissions in his book. First he isolates the children from the rest of his life: what is perhaps most challenging about children is the balancing act they impose between themselves and other areas of importance and necessity. By explicitly eliminating even his relationship to his wife and his work from the text, this challenge disappears. I cannot believe that anyone, however slightly involved with their children, in the course of a whole year has not felt there to be some occasion of intolerable 'either/or'; and, given that men's work is so much more highly regarded and socially supported, I would very much like to hear from men how they tackle this dilemma. With this omission goes the fact that Harrison set up an arrangement where being involved with his children emotionally (since he planned to publish the diary) actually was his paid work — an unusual situation and one which must have affected the quality of his relationship with them.

Furthermore, although Harrison makes clear that he is not writing about childhood but about his children, he still generalises wildly. His son is more aggressive than his daughter (in a healthy and amusing way I should add) — and he immediately leaps to inborn gender difference, never considering their relative place in the family, parental expectation, social construction, TV input or even the possibility that his data pool is hardly statistically significant. Here, as with other generalisations, there is a strong feeling that the 'evidence' confirms pre-existing beliefs and this is comforting to him. Which is fair enough, but in a confessional, intimate book there needs to be more self-examination and conscious subjectivity. 'Pure' experience is not enough.

What I do have to acknowledge is that somewhere my personal prejudices have led me to fail to stress the charm of the young Harrisons and their country childhood; and the simplicity, genuineness and sweetness of their father's writing. I also have to acknowledge, despite all these things, plus the political challenges above, that the daily lives and quaint sayings of someone else's pre-school children are frankly rather boring. □

Points of view

Zhana

Black Women Writers 1950-1980: Arguments and Interviews
ed. MARI EVANS *Pluto* £6.95

IT IS WONDERFUL, yet suspect, to find so many, varied and different Black women writers lumped together within the covers of one book. Exciting, promising, to see women whose names are household words alongside women I've never heard of. Each of them has produced a large body of work over the course of the last three decades.

All of these women were born in the United States. All of them have been writing since the Black Power movement, many of them since well before then. Some are revered by white feminists, some by male Pan Africanists. Two have won Pulitzer Prizes. (Perhaps that's why the period 1950-1980 was chosen — it's taken 33 years for a second Black woman to win a Pulitzer.) One identifies herself as a 'womanist', one as a lesbian.

What can one say about a book that promises so much? That it can't possibly live up to readers' expectations. That it's jumping on a bandwagon. Cashing in on Black women writers' current popularity.

Black Women Writers is divided into 15 chapters on authors, all but two of whom have included pieces on themselves, their lives and their work. Also included in each chapter are two analyses of the author's work. The most valuable parts of the book are the authors' own writings, which were done in response to a questionnaire.

The writers speak of subjects peculiar to women artists — how they manage to work around their family and household obligations, how they separate their public from their private selves. And they speak of their dilemma in choosing, or refusing, to put one part of themselves before the others — the Black, the woman or the writer. It is refreshing to read Maya Angelou's 'I write because I am a Black woman', or Alice Childress's 'A Black writer is a person, and there should be no room for contradiction.'

There is a real awareness of how Black history informs the writers' work: Alice Childress recalls having had to drag stories out of her grandmother and, later, stresses the importance of respecting, preserving and reproducing African speech patterns in Black literature; Sonia Sanchez writes of the great African poetic oral tradition; Maya Angelou is in love with the speech of Black folks, 'its rumblings and

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passages of magical lyricism'. And the words reflect a sense of the Black readership which is waiting eagerly for these writings. But, disappointingly, very few references are made to how women's unique experience has influenced or is portrayed in the works of these authors. Only Audre Lorde talks of women as readers with whom she specifically wishes to communicate. There is no attempt to toy with feminist restructuring of language — in fact, much of the language used leaves me as a woman invisible. It is useful and informative to me, as a Black woman writer, to read of the joys, pains, blood, ecstasy of writers plying their craft, painstakingly shaping works and bringing characters into being or, occasionally, being struck by inspiration.

But, while most of the reviewers included here are also Black women writers, infuriatingly, 14 out of the 43 articles were written by men. I doubt that a book on white women writers would have felt it necessary to include work by the other half of the species, and I'm sure Evans could have found women writers equally capable of intelligent and thought-provoking literary criticism.

All in all, though, I'm grateful that we have a chance to see, recorded, Black women writers' thoughts on what they consider to be important about their work, and I hope that more will follow. □

Conspiracies?

Duncan Campbell

The Waste Remains
JUDITH COOK *Pluto* £7.95 & £2.50
The Price of Freedom
JUDITH COOK *New English Library* £8.95
Death of a Rose Grower: Who killed Hilda Murrell?
GRAHAM SMITH *Cecil Woolf* £5.95 & £2.50

MRS HILDA MURRELL, the celebrated rose grower and sometime anti-nuclear campaigner, died just over a year ago. These three books, directly and indirectly, explore the issues which have been sensationally linked with her cruel murder at the hands of an assailant still unknown and at large.

Wide public awareness of the circumstances of her death started on the shores of fiction. Judith Cook's novel of a Ministry of Defence conspiracy to conceal an accident at a nerve gas store in Suffolk, **The Waste Remains**, is said to have inspired one of the late Mrs Murrell's neighbours to contact Ms Cook and ask: had fiction been, as ever, lagging behind fact? Was Hilda Murrell's death, as the police believed, merely the hideous consequence of a casual burglar's deranged behaviour or was it connected to her interest in the nuclear industry?

Judith Cook's first report on this affair appeared in the *NS* last November and has provoked a subsequent tide of conspiracy theory. Judith Cook speculatively linked the murder to the Sizewell reactor enquiry. Soon after, Tam Dalyell MP introduced an alternative conspiracy theory: that she had been killed by an intelligence agent who was searching for documents supposedly left with her by her nephew, who had been an intelligence officer at the Northwood Naval HQ during the Falklands war.

The cascade of media stories which followed has grown increasingly hairy, and trivial clues have been investigated at length without fundamental questions being asked about how, or why, M15, M16, or any other odd intelligence agency should really have any interest at all in the old lady. Since Judith Cook started investigating, and Graham Smith started writing his book, every slight difficulty with letters they receive or phone calls they make has been blamed on the secret world and avidly reported in diary columns.

In *The Waste Remains*, a young journalist dies mysteriously and his body is dumped at sea by the MoD baddies. A homely woman friend living nearby is left to piece together how he discovered the existence and effects of a secret nerve gas stockpile once held in a remote Sussex coastal village.

Although bettering the sort of novel in which technical or scientific incompetence is held out as a badge of literacy, the tale is marred by a lack of real depth of understanding of the secret official world. In the end, the MoD plotter who engineered two deaths (that just doesn't happen) suddenly confesses all to the investigative heroine, and promptly asks her to forget all about it — which she does!

Some lack of depth of understanding is also present in **The Price of Freedom**. Here, Judith Cook sets out with the laudable motive of attacking official secrecy in those areas where it is easiest for ordinary folk to perceive its evil — in health, social administration and local government, in employment and welfare. This is a necessary antidote to the high-falutin' and exotic attacks on nuclear, military or intelligence secrecy with which much investigative journalism (myself and the *New Statesman* often included) is associated, rightly or wrongly.

But *The Price of Freedom* does then creep on to deal with these more sensational areas, creating a very fragmentary feel to all of its coverage. It is a chatty *pot-pourri* of stories about bad secrecy, without much attempt to escape from the anecdotal and incidental into overview or analysis. Sadly, this is likely to alienate many of those who are not already converted to the Freedom of Information cause and prevent them reading some of the disturbing stories here collated.

However, implicitly to represent the entire public service as a conspiracy to deceive is a disservice to understanding which can blind one to real misbehaviour when it happens. One can, like TV programmes recently hot on the Murrell trail, get careless about asking fundamental questions, only to be embarrassed when 'missing' evidence is put on display a week later.

Graham Smith, a Cornwall-based investigative journalist, has avoided such mistakes in following the trail which Judith Cook blazed to produce the first book about the Murrell case. In **Death of a Rose Grower** he sensibly equivocates as to whether he really backs any of the theories — Belgrano, nuclear or burgling nutcase, and focuses instead on the inadequacies of the police investigations, which are many. At one point, West Mercia Constabulary had to produce an 11-page press release justifying its behaviour.

If ever a police force wanted to foster a conspiracy theory by creating an impression that it didn't want to solve the crime, it may have its model in West Mercia. To a significant extent, poor press relations and indifferent police work — ranging from mere oversight to a group of detectives caught out on the golf course when they were supposed to be in working on the files — have created the public uncertainty which now complicates its further enquiries.

Death of a Rose-Grower is a short, valuable and cogent guide to the evidence so far and is relatively untainted by the need to sensationalise which has overcome so much other TV and press reporting. It is marred by poor editing and production (such as having chapters numbered in the index, but nowhere else). But the evidence thus far is there, presented with reasonable dispassion. There is still a man to be brought to justice for murder, questions to be answered about Mrs Murrell's death; West Mercia detectives are still about and abroad, and still asking all the wrong questions. Nevertheless, the balance of probability on the evidence so far is, in my view, clear; it is a retreat from the shores of fiction to allow Hilda Murrell to rest in peace with an uncomplicated epitaph on her grave. □

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David Bradshaw

Lady Gregory: The Woman Behind the Irish Renaissance
MARY LOU KOHFELDT *Deutsch* £12.95

A TIRELESS IMPRESARIO and dramatist, whose comedies Mary Lou Kohfeldt describes, in a pardonable leap into blarney, as 'explosions of laughter', Lady Gregory conducted her personal life with a phlegmatic, even stolid, sangfroid. Her complete diary entry for 20 May 1881 reads, 'Luncheon party, Bowers, Oranmores, Mr. Gough, Power Trench, A. Moore, F. O'Hara. At 9.00 Baby was born.' She showed similar composure when threatened in Chicago some years later. The supposedly blood-curdling letter she received, complete with a macabre sketch of a revolver and coffin, left her profoundly unruffled. 'I don't feel anxious,' she told her fretful relatives, 'for I don't think from the drawing that the sender

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has much knowledge of firearms.' It was this imperturbable, patrician hauteur that, ironically, made Lady Gregory such a formidable force in the creation of a popular, racy and nationalist culture.

Her role in the Irish renaissance involved a striking about-face. For the first half of her life, Lady Gregory was a committed opponent of Home Rule, not only gloating over Gladstone's difficulties, but adding to them with an alarmist pamphlet of her own. (Oddly, although she was resistant to Irish autonomy, she simultaneously advocated independence for Egypt.) But after the death of her husband in 1892, Lady Gregory, to borrow a phrase from Yeats, 'changed utterly'. The sombre mourning garb she wore from then on belied the gusto with which she devoted herself to the nationalist cause. The influence of the Anglo-Irish Protestant minority from which she came had been waning for some time, and Lady Gregory's plays and collections of Irish epics and folklore helped to establish a national literary identity preparatory to the *risorgimento* which would eventually wrest power by force.

Lady Gregory commuted to the Abbey Theatre from Coole, the Gregory seat in the west of Ireland, which became a sanctuary for her Dublin friends and protégés. More a Gertrude Jekyll than an Ottoline Morrell, Lady Gregory took a fierce pride in her gardens at Coole. While on a stroll through one plantation, Sean O'Casey recalled her hissing with fury as she felled a triffid-like thistle.

Almost smothered by her careless mother at birth, Lady Gregory always dispensed a busy and maternal benevolence wherever she was living. Whole parishes were adopted during her sojourn in London, with Lady G. heading innumerable underprivileged crocodiles to the Natural History Museum. Later on the Abbey players were fortified by her potent barmbrack, a fruitcake heavily laced with rum which she doled out during rehearsals, enabling them to carry on even during the riots caused by Synge's *Playboy of the Western World*. 'I am,' she once said, 'much cumbered with serving.'

The most cherished of all Lady Gregory's guests at Coole was undoubtedly W.B. Yeats. From his first day there he was coddled like a nabob. Having ensconced the sickly poet in the best room, she prescribed a round-the-clock regimen of beef tea, though Sir Ian Hamilton swore he once caught a whiff of bacon and eggs being taken to his rug-snug sanctum. If at times Lady Gregory's solicitude could be an embarrassing liability — she was once overheard to say, 'Stand up, now, Willie, and do it properly,' when introducing Yeats to a group of American journalists — her anxious surveillance of his health certainly prolonged what might have been a tragically brief career. Yeats's gratitude was expressed in some of his most notable poems, though contemporary Ireland as a whole was generally tardy, even reluctant, to acknowledge its debt.

This affectionate, brim-full biography supersedes Elizabeth Coxhead's earlier account of Augusta Gregory, and would be a pleasant surprise to a remarkable woman who wrote her memoirs simply to spike the 'stupidities' of future biographical 'scribblers'. □

FICTION

Nor iron bars

Richard Deveson

My Merry Mornings
IVAN KLIMA *Readers International*
£8.95 & £4.95
The Retreat
AHARON APPELFELD *Quartet Encounter* £3.95
Mrs Henderson and Other Stories
FRANCIS WYNDHAM *Cape* £8.50
The Italian Lesson
JANICE ELLIOTT *Hodder* £8.95

ONE OF THE SUBTLER ways in which totalitarianism oppresses writers is to force them to write about oppression. The banned author writing stories told by an 'I' who is an author who has been banned for writing stories that criticise the authorities for banning authors — it is harsh to have to say it, but one's ready political and human sympathies are liable to be frightened off by the sight of such literary self-cannibalisation, however understandable it may be. Being banned not only doesn't mean you must be a good writer; it can also be bad for your writing — as it's meant to be.

Ivan Klíma's **My Merry Mornings** isn't, I think, entirely free of the Czech government's clutches in this sense. Some of its stories remain

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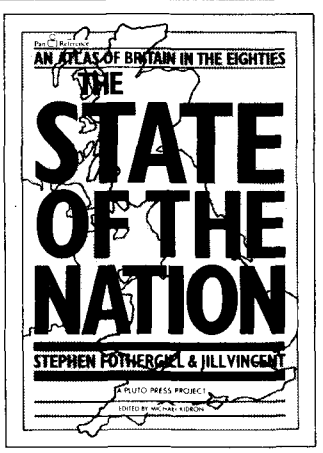

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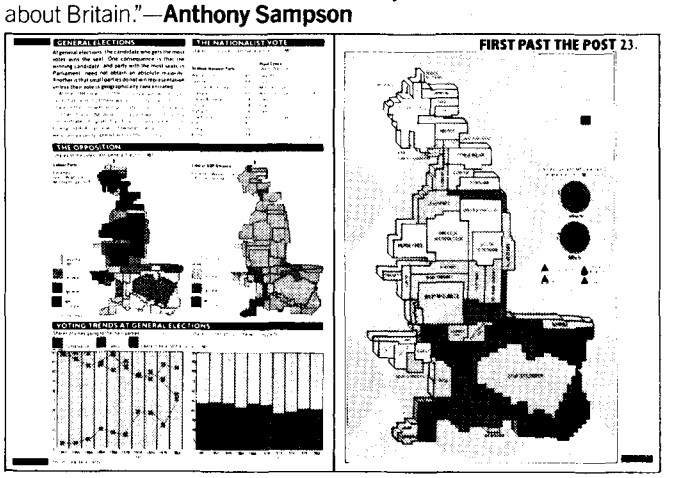

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anecdotal, shaped only by the fact that they seem actually to have happened to the 'I' who is very like Klíma. Others, however, escape into art. Klíma was an established writer before 1969 but, since then, his work has appeared only in typed 'padlock editions'. His *alter ego* here has to do occasional stints as a hospital porter and selling Christmas carp on the streets; he encounters wise-guy black marketeers and cheerful skivers who tend to worst him; he is obliged to waste hours in run-down car-repair workshops and on building sites surrounded by mud and nettles, scanned by the huge skeletons of unfinished high-rise blocks. Sex, as so often in Czech writing, is plentiful, farcical and an anarchic defiance of the puritanical tyranny of the state.

The best stories are ones in which Klíma manages suddenly to illuminate an abstract or moralised pattern from within an apparent mishmash of incidents. He succeeds in convincing one, for example, that an image of a writer and a randy reform-school girl and an absent-minded ex-philosopher, all floating in a rowing boat in a flooded South Bohemian field — the professor's briefcase is full of banned Charter 77 documents and the combination to the lock is the year when Carneades of Cyrene began lecturing in Rome, only the professor's forgotten the date — is a true symbol of the condition of contemporary Czechoslovakia. Not everyone will care for this Czech shrug of ironic self-mockery, but it is arguably, under the circumstances, a profound assertion of freedom. The excellent translation is by George Theiner, the editor of *Index on Censorship*.

Aharon Appelfeld's **The Retreat**, translated from the Hebrew by Dalya Bilu, is something of a disappointment. Like his *Badenheim 1939*, it is a quasi-allegory of the fate of European Jewry, this time portrayed in the withdrawal of a group of Jews to a magic mountain somewhere in a surreal Austria in a surreal 1937-38. They live in a sort of hotel that is also a sort of prison; the owner has tried to convert them to 'un-Jewish' pursuits such as riding and tennis, but they have lapsed into arguments and quietism. Down in the flatlands (populated exclusively by blond beery peasants) Hitler is marching in, though this is never mentioned and the Jews are too isolated to know about it.

The novel cannot be criticised for lacking a realism at which it isn't aiming — though it does imply a historical and political judgment on assimilated Central European Jewry which is certainly contestable. It is disappointing because, even as an attempt to capture poetically the essential character of a historical moment, it is pallid and out of focus. It is as though the author is making an elegiac transcription of a memory of something that did not in fact happen to him. This is moving, but for the wrong reasons.

Francis Wyndham wrote some fiction before the age of 21 but has waited a good 40 years before producing **Mrs Henderson and Other Stories**. It is embarrassing to have to sound like the well-meaning but interfering friends he guys in one of these pieces, but he should be urged now, as they urge him, to make up for lost time. These stories and (at a guess) lightly fictionalised memoirs are first-rate. The title story is classic English-short-story understatement: the benighted ten-year-old boy; the brittle woman in perfumed *crêpe de chine*; an image of the early-morning Great West Road, factories, garages; expectancy and emptiness. Another story impressively commemorates a half-sister, Ursula, whose eccentricity and loving-kindness take her all the way from Edwardian upper-class privilege to black New York in the 1960s. Wyndham's recall of dialogue and detail is impeccable, and can be devastating. I was particularly taken with Ursula's arty Twenties Chelsea friends, Bunch, Flash, Fay — and Enid ffrench, whose vanity-press poems *Crinkum-Crankum* include 'Gardening', which boasts the opening line: 'I hang my woolie on a branch'.

The Italian Lesson is a Tuscan-holiday story, jetting in where E.M. Forster has already trodden. But Janice Elliott is no fool — far from it. Her novel is highly intelligent, rather knowing, a very skilfully made web of Forsterian motifs ironically elaborated for the 1980s. Two English couples are staying in the hills above Florence and, as happens even to self-conscious, well-read English people on holiday in novels, their ideas about abroad are shaken up and the troubles they transport from home reassert themselves, to be resolved or not as the case may be. Numinous woods, Pan and panic, a baby and what to do about it, symbolic accidents and coincidences, 'trouble and muddle' — to these are now added sanitised modern tourism and terrorist bombs. The book is perhaps just too self-conscious for its own good, but it is conscious of being self-conscious and it *is* good. □

Peter Redgrove

Grand buveur X

To endeavour by drinking to condense
As far as possible the all-pervading
Mother-body of water, to become

One of her whole and rounded bald glisters.
As the web drinks the dew
And displays its coruscations

So the body brims
With burning internalised
Self-interest, like light in drops.

The mind becoming water skims
With transient patterns like the waterflies.
I stroke her web, says the fly,

Which is pearled with icons,
I stroke her glittering moisture,
I stroke her silk,

I am captivated
Says the falling-down
Glass-reversing brittle acrobat

Of the lipped trapezes that tilt
On slow ropes that have elbows.

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Shorter reviews

A Classical Education
RICHARD COBB *Chatto* £9.95

Richard Cobb's earlier volume of autobiography, *Still Life*, contained a passing reference to an Irish chum at Shrewsbury School who later killed his mother and threw the body over a cliff. This volume provides the whole story of Cobb's association with the murderer, 'Edward', from their first meeting in 1932 until the present. Though longstanding, it has not been deep. Even while at Shrewsbury, they began to drift apart, the gap widening after Cobb left for Oxford. Probably, they would have lost contact altogether had not Edward, in 1936, battered his mother (nicknamed 'Medea') to death with an axe during a fit of rage.

An immediate consequence of his swift arrest was that Cobb fell under suspicion. Over the previous 18 months, the histrionic Medea had taken to claiming that his 'evil influence' had turned Edward against her (in fact, their mutual dislike was inveterate). Learning of this, the Dublin CID for a time regarded him first as a possible accomplice and then as the possible instigator of the crime. The long-term effect, though, was to prolong the friendship. Found guilty but insane, Edward served 13 years in Dundrum Asylum. Unsurprisingly, being gregarious, he clung to outside connections, each week sending a lengthy (and rather dull) letter to Cobb, who replied desultorily. The pattern established, things have continued on similar lines since Edward's release.

A Classical Education offers some excellent writing and some fine entertainment: Medea circularising every Oxbridge college, urging them not to admit the 'utterly immoral' Cobb; the headmaster of Shrewsbury anxiously pulling strings to ensure that the school is never mentioned in newspaper reports of Edward's trial. . . But because the book records a friendship that has hardly ever occupied a central position in Cobb's life, it leaves a final impression of slightness, of being an expanded anecdote, albeit one expanded most engagingly.

David Montrose

Neutrality: a Policy for Britain
PETER JOHNSON *Temple Smith* £9.50 & £3.95

'A considerable degree of consensus,' Peter Johnson rightly observes, would be needed before Britain could adopt the policy of armed neutrality advocated in his short but clearly argued book. Peace movement activists may pursue more distant goals — a bloc-free Europe in a new, cooperative relationship with developing countries — but broad support has yet to be won for the first steps. Where CND makes the abandonment of nuclear weapons its starting-point, Johnson begins instead from the orientation of military non-alignment, with measures of nuclear disarmament.

Johnson shows no trace of little-Englandism or post-imperial nostalgia. Nonetheless (and this is part of the book's importance), he writes from a conservative standpoint, as his opening survey of the two superpowers makes clear. Brief accounts of several neutral European countries follow, and he concludes by discussing the military and foreign policy objectives of a neutral Britain. More space might have been found for discussion of civil disobedience as an element of in-depth defence; one misses any close engagement with recent debates and polemics; there is insufficient acknowledgement of the ultimate vulnerability of any defence strategy in the nuclear age, and of the truth that we can survive only by preserving and strengthening peace. A more fundamental objection is that, the US alliance being the final guarantor of capitalism, Western European leaders will remain committed to it despite any reservations about the Reagan administration — and the Americans, for their part, will cling rather tenaciously to their allies (as David Lange can testify). However, if Johnson understates the determination of popular neutralist commitment needed for his ideas to be realised, the ideas themselves, cogently set out here, may help to create the commitment.

M. H. Ryle

Fires
RAYMOND CARVER *Collins* £8.95

Carver is of that generation of male American writers who seem to have been married from birth, the sort whose stories always get back at some point to 'my wife' and beating a bowl of eggs for breakfast. There are only two tenses — married or divorced — and squeezed between them the moment when what might be becomes what might have been. Even his idyllic scenes of vacations spent hunting or fishing are *nostalgically* immediate, as though they are being depicted more caringly than they could ever have been observed at the time.

As well as seven new stories, a memoir of his father and a generous selection of poetry, *Fires* contains three essays on writing, in which Carver concentrates on the craft of writing in the style of arm-around-the-shoulder inverted rhetoric: 'There has to be talent. Some writers have a bunch of talent; I don't know any writers who are without it. . .'

Whatever our reservations about this kind of precious understatement there can be no doubts about the stories themselves: Carver is a master; his stories are word perfect. His sentences stalk out meaning, following a trail of clues with patient care and painful anticipation. In this respect he is very like Hemingway with whom he is often and justly compared: better writing on about carp than carping on about writing.

The inclusion of over 60 poems (two of which, on Flaubert and Balzac, offer the sharpest commentaries on writing to be found anywhere in the book) makes *Fires* an indispensable volume and provides further proof of Carver's stature as a major American writer. Anyone waiting for a paperback can take heart in Picador's *The Stories of Raymond Carver*. Comprising the previous collections *Will You Please Be Quiet, Please?*, *What We Talk About When We Talk About Love* and *Cathedral*, it is excellent value at £3.50.

Geoff Dyer

Anne Frank's Tales from the Secret Annexe
ANNE FRANK *Viking* £7.95

Anne Frank, as everyone knows, was the Jewish girl who successfully hid from the Nazis in Amsterdam until she and her family were caught in the summer of 1944. She died at 15 in Belsen, heartbreakingly near the end of the war, leaving behind a diary and a notebook of stories and sketches. The diary was first published in 1947, but Anne Frank's other writings are much less well known.

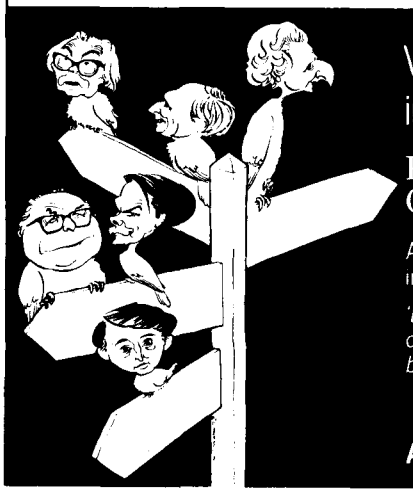
Of course they are immature, the dialogue is stilted, there are perhaps a few too many fairies and elves among the characters, but the promise of a fine mature writer is evident on every page. Anne Frank had imagination and the insatiable urge to put pen to paper; she would have had to struggle hard *not* to be a writer when she grew up. Despite her earnest tone, she has a light touch too, and the imagination to create amusing situations, like the predicament of Blurry the bear who bumbles into a job sweeping out a bakery.

Anne Frank is interested in moral questions and the problem of knowing oneself and others. In one sketch a girl who gives away her fruit tart feels more enjoyment than either the girl she gives it to or another girl who keeps her pastry for herself. She is a fairly sophisticated pantheist for a 14-year-old: nature is a cause of happiness and a cure for despair.

Anne Frank would be 55 now if she had lived. You can bet that her latest book would be translated into a dozen languages as soon as it appeared in Dutch. Her death was a loss to literature and this collection, together with her diary, is the proof of it. The translations by Ralph Manheim and Michel Mok are in the main good and inconspicuous.

Sarah Lawson

BRITISH DEMOCRACY AT THE CROSSROADS



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FILMS

Cutting-room floor show

John Coleman

Baby-sitter (Richard Gere) and charge (Diane Lane) at *The Cotton Club*

The Cotton Club (15)
Odeon, Leicester Square
Falling in Love (PG)
Empire
Protocol (PG)
Warner; Classic, Oxford Street; ABCs, Bayswater and Edgware Road
Parker (15)
Classics, Haymarket and Chelsea
The Future of Emily (15)
Electric Screen

FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA has been much obsessed by fantasy in his last few excursions (*The Outsiders, Rumble Fish, One from the Heart*), sugaring pills of bleak delinquency and blighted wedlock with arty coatings of studio make-believe, falling with a bump between two styles. With **The Cotton Club** he carries the process a sound-stage further, coming a decisive cropper between two genres. It has music wherever it goes, thank heavens and Bob Wilber (who is credited with the 'recreations'), but it is not a musical. It certainly has mobsters and molls and mayhem, yet it is not a gangster movie. The tangy words 'Cotton Club' are nicely calculated to raise a gleam in the dullest eye: Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway, a host of legendary black entertainers, Harlem, Prohibition, café-society white audiences, bootleggers, Dutch Schultz, the numbers racket, gang warfare, racism subtle and blatant, with probably some overall emphasis on raunchy showbiz — the glitter and the blue notes — taking notional pride of place. Here, as producer Robert Evans must have thought before the publicised troubles began, is box-office plenty. All that was needed was for someone, somewhere, to sit quietly down in a padded room and write a workable script. As it is, we have a shapeless story, scrambled brain-child of Mario Puzo, William Kennedy and Coppola, worded into a restless screenplay by the last two fellows.

Reduced to its banality, the tale involves a cornet-player, Dixie Dwyer (Richard Gere), who is taken up by a grateful Dutch Schultz (James Remar) as baby-sitter for his mistress Vera (Diane Lane); inevitably falls for her; becomes a movie star playing gangsters; and gets Vera in the closing reel. Dixie's brother rises to his own ugly fame as the 'Mad Dog' hood whose goons accidentally shoot down some kids before he too goes the way of all flesh. The Dwyer family has echoes in a black one, with dancer Sandman Williams (Gregory Hines) abandoning *his* partner-brother for solo glory and carrying a torch for ambitious artiste Lila Rose (Lonette McKee), who is light-coloured enough to 'pass'. The fortunes of Dixie and Sandman are interwoven with those of the Family, i.e. Dutch, the Cotton Club underworld boss Owney Madden (Bob Hoskins) and gravel-voiced Frenchy (Fred Gwynne), his towering sidekick. Lucky Luciano crops up; as do Gloria Swanson — who tells Dixie he's 'gorgeous' and sets him Hollywood-bound — and Cagney and Chaplin and Fanny Brice, young look-alikes briefly patronising the Club. Coppola uses two or three quick passages of montage to indicate a down-the-years progression, from 1928 to the early 30s, and this quite engagingly.

But the entire occasion could be described as extended montage. Everyone named performs excellently well, the showgirls kick away under orange and pink tints to the period born, and Gregory Hines taps up an absolute storm. One episode in a black hoofers' club actually allows Terpsichore her head and feet to the full. Elsewhere, the patron saint might be St Vitus; or for choreography read chorea. The slaughter of Dutch and his myrmidons cross-cuts with Sandman rat-tatting a big, spotlit number, so that one is left with a sense of *ludus interruptus* on both counts. Cab Calloway's notorious 'Minnie the Moocher', splendidly rendered by Larry Marshall, is rent by editing in of other business. Hardly a song or dance gets its just deserts; but then as much is true of scenes of brittle flirting, love, lust and the whole damn thing. For those who can settle for some fine shreds and patches (Frenchy's comportment when kidnapped, Hoskins's tough Madden *in toto*, Gere/Dixie by a poster of himself in *Mob Boss*), there are compensations over and above the professionalism of the music. Too few.

Ulu Grosbard has already directed Robert De Niro, as the venal, expressionless monsignor in *True Confessions*. Maybe there is a lack of rapport here, or maybe De Niro is just miscast as the Westchester County commuter, an engineer with nice wife and two small sons, who slides disastrously into love for Meryl Streep's fellow-traveller on the train to Manhattan. Certainly most of the passion communicated in Grosbard's **Falling in Love**, an attenuated and American-affluent version of *Brief Encounter*, emanates from Streep's artist-housewife Molly: even her nose looks lustful during one bookshop meeting. If you like stars and up-beat endings, then this pasteurised romance is what you'll like. Goldie Hawn's daffy candour is the miracle ingredient on which the success of Herbert Ross's **Protocol** presumably relies. As the Washington cocktail waitress who foils the assassination of a visiting Emir and is innocently enlisted by the State Department for its devious ends, her ultimately disabused Sunny can do little with a 'satire' that makes Capra seem beady-eyed in retrospect. Miss Hawn as 'We-the-people's' champion, all giggles and sincerity, had me gagging.

Our own Jim Goddard's **Parker**, written by another TV talent, Trevor Preston, is an unpursuable thriller, photographically framed within an inch of its frail life, sending thin-mouthed Bryan Brown as a kidnapped and released toy salesman lurching about in Germany and England. Kurt Raab is rather bad as the Munich cop who shares his bafflement, Cherie Lunghi sweet as the wife who sensibly disowns it. Helma Sanders-Brahms, a German director displaying an unwarranted public fascination with bits of her autobiography, has a selfish actor-daughter at loggerheads with her selfish drinking mama in **The Future of Emily**, a drear affair that underlines Bergman's genius in *Autumn Sonata*, where the bitching was about something. □

Recommended viewing

A regular selection by our critic from films still doing the rounds

Amadeus Peter Shaffer's rich, vulgar and potent fantasy about mediocrity's revenge on genius, sumptuously directed by Milos Forman, with F. Murray Abraham outstanding as Salieri and Mozart's music cascading from the screen.

A Private Function Blissful and British double first as Michael Mowbray steers top-notch cast through puncturingly word-perfect Alan Bennett comedy set in 1947 Yorkshire. Nagged by social-climbing wife, meek chiropodist gets revenge on local unworthies by stealing black-market pig. (Maggie Smith, Michael Palin).

Favourites of the Moon Summary-defying, hypnotic entertainment from Georgian director Otar Yosseliani, making his fifth film during stay in a Paris he packs with pass-the-parcel thieves, tramps, whores, mistresses, anarchists and *flics*.

Beverly Hills Cop Brilliant young Eddie Murphy (*48 HRS, Trading Places*) hoists workaday hunt-the-cocaine thriller into compulsive viewing.

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THEATRE

Playing to win

Benedict Nightingale

Golden Girls
LOUISE PAGE *Pit*
Old Times
HAROLD PINTER *Haymarket*

WHAT HAS HAPPENED to sport? I myself wondered last week as I crouched with my fellow-hooligans behind the electricity-carrying cattle fence at Chelsea Football Club and watched the home team battle to an unremarkable draw with the highly-paid robots of Tottenham. Louise Page clearly wonders too, or did when she researched **Golden Girls**, whose subject is a women's relay team going for glory in some big European meet in today's Greece.

Actually, I suspect sport wasn't as chaste in the Greece of yesteryear as we like to pretend. Cheating is probably about as old as competition; and if the head coach of the Theban team had thought that steroids, or the almost-invisible drug that precipitates the denouement of *Golden Girls*, would have helped his lads to victory over Sparta, he might well have been tempted to slip a tablet or two into their chow. So the runner-turned-doctor ultimately responsible for both the success and the failure of Page's sprinters is being a bit sentimental when she looks back at long-past Olympics and rhapsodises: 'Oh, it was a different world then, everything was fun, then the four-minute mile was cracked, and everything got serious.' Her next remark, though, seems more to the point in defining a change that has recently occurred in sport, at least in the West: 'It's a business now.'

Ephridites never carried the logo of Parthenon Marble Inc on his tee-shirt when he outpaced Calchas on that grassy plain. But Page's relay runners know that more money will give them a chance against the computerised athletes of the GDR, perhaps even help them to challenge the British male record for the four-times-400, and so they're content enough when some soap-bubble manufacturers decide to support them. But sponsorship doesn't come without pressure: to behave 'responsibly' off the field, which seems to mean mentioning Golden Girls Shampoo as often as possible in newspaper interviews, and to score conspicuously on it. The team coach even finds himself badgered to drop black runners in favour of supposedly more saleable whites. 'I'm accountable — men in suits, waistcoats,' explains the PR executive played by Polly James as something between an Avon saleslady and a very enthusiastic ferret. It cannot come to good, and it doesn't.

Ms Page succumbs to cliché — that cynical journalist, marinated in alcohol, hissing 'I need a scandal for my career' through his rotting teeth — more often than she realises. But her subject is still an interestingly unusual one for the theatre and she handles it with understanding both of the desperate passions involved and of the forces exploiting them to their own incongruous ends. By the close we've something that's partly an illuminating parable about varieties of contemporary voracity and their mutilation of the human spirit, and partly a girls-own adventure whose somewhat exorbitant length is scarcely noticeable, thanks to the vivid and intelligent cameo acting on offer in Barry Kyle's production. As often, naming names seems unjust to a well-balanced cast; but it would take more self-denial than I possess to pass over Josette Simon, who plays the balkiest and most fiercely ambitious of the runners. She's a performer of majestic bearing and authentic intensity; and I hope we'll see her alternately smouldering and exploding for years to come.

Memories are weapons whose potency is insufficiently recognised. You can, for instance, use them to suggest you've a uniquely long and deep knowledge of another person, thereby creating emotional havoc among those who have arrived later in his or her life. In-laws and ex-lovers sometimes do battle in this way, and so does the intruder at the nerve-centre of Pinter's **Old Times**. Anna, as she's called, once shared a rich, culturally fulfilling life in London with Kate, and doesn't succeed in hiding her suspicion that marriage to Deeley and exile to the English outback have reduced her old friend to a passive kitchen object. After a particularly provocative Freudian slip — 'you've a wonderful casserole, I mean wife' — the struggle is joined between husband and guest, and becomes more and more slyly venomous. Before long Deeley is emphasising his familiarity with his spouse's body by fake-casually discussing her bathing, drying and powdering habits, and Anna is coolly responding in kind. Neither will stop at anything to win the looked-for prize, which is nothing less than the ownership of Kate.

It's a marvellously resonant play, well worth what seems to be its first major revival since its original production in 1971. After all, what does it show? How a visitor can bring out the tensions in a seemingly stable situation. How the past merges with the present, how it simultaneously defines and threatens it. How there are always parts of people we love from which we're excluded, parts others have shared, parts we can only guess at and try not to mistrust. The play is about the pain of never fully knowing someone and, of course, it's also about the subject I was airing last week, the gap between language and meaning, word and feeling. Deeley and Anna may be trying to inflict intimate atrocities on each other, but mostly they do so with frigid personal politeness and perfect social decorum. Anyone who has found it more polite to use hint, sarcasm or parable rather than direct statement should respond to *Old Times*. So should anyone who has felt got at without quite being able to explain why. So, indeed, should anyone who has talked his or her way through an emotional minefield, knowing that a misplaced syllable could cause megadeath in the living room.

Nicola Pagett neither misses nor over-emphasises Kate's narcissistic allure, her tantalising yet elusive sexuality, her ability to provoke others to frantic displays of possessiveness without actually being possessed by anyone. But Michael Gambon's Deeley becomes too obviously angry, too overtly aggressive, perhaps because he's an actor to whom neither anger nor aggression comes easily; and there were times when I wondered if Liv Ullman, too, wasn't a bit miscast. That wasn't merely because her strong and occasionally confusing accent wasn't what you'd expect of someone who had spent her prime junketing in London. Rather, it was that by comparison with the cloying predator Vivien Merchant created 14 years ago, she seemed strangely warm, genial, even healthy. And yet is this really cause for complaint? It could perhaps be argued that Anna's character, David Jones's production and Pinter's play all gain in subtlety as a result. The more deeply disguised these people's needs and greeds, the more superficially decent their behaviour, the greater the watchfulness and moral discrimination demanded of you and me in the audience, quietly boggling at the fray. □

JAZZ

Black and blues

Charles Fox

MOST PEOPLE think of a jungle as being simultaneously perilous and exotic. The Cotton Club, situated in the heart of Harlem, in its heyday lived up to both halves of that definition. Danger was provided by the ownership and management, mobsters almost to a man. Exoticism came from the music and dancing that went on, most of it designed — at the end of the 1920s, anyway — to hoodwink an exclusively white clientele into imagining that Harlem was only a handspring from darkest Africa.

Cashing in — in a most sophisticated way — on that taste for primitivism was Duke Ellington's route to fame. Quite a few of his early records purported to be the work of The Jungle Band. That aspect is hinted at in the film, **The Cotton Club**, which makes cunning and dramatic use of excerpts from over a score of numbers in Ellington's repertoire — with rather too many cut off tantalisingly in mid-chorus. The re-creations, splendidly in period, were supervised by Bob Wilber. Never an Ellingtonian himself, Wilber was, however, a protégé of Sidney Bechet, who certainly inspired Johnny Hodges, the most buoyant of Ellington's long-serving saxophonists.

At the Cotton Club the song-writing, choreography, overall production and other lucrative tasks were all in white hands. Blacks performed, waited at the tables or stood outside watching the Oldsmobiles and Stutz Bearcats rolling up. The cynically minded may view the preponderance of white musicians on the film sound-track (as distinct from on-screen) as perpetuating that old tradition. After all, Lou Soloff blows the Cootie Williams trumpet solos, while Harry Carney's baritone saxophone sound is conjured up by a Scot, Joe Temperley, once with Humphrey Lyttelton's band. But the truth is that white musicians are more addicted to this kind of scholarship, more dedicated to reviving past glories. Only one

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genuine Ellingtonian seems to have taken part: the trombonist Britt Woodman, who plays the Lawrence Brown solos.

Zane Mark, as Duke Ellington, never speaks but flashes the right kind of smile. It is Larry Marshall, as Cab Calloway, the bandleader who alternated with Ellington at the club throughout most of the 1930s, who flings himself most authentically into his role, cavorting, wailing, hair flopping over his face. Calloway's 'The Lady With The Fan' is a reminder of how Cotton Club music generally fitted a theatrical purpose. The floor show routine built around Ellington's 'Daybreak Express' even bursts beyond the club's boundaries, turning the film's finale into a parable. Bob Hoskins's presence heightens the affinity with *Pennies From Heaven*.

The historical Cotton Club was not far removed from the kind of place glimpsed on screen, a fact confirmed by Jim Haskins's *The Cotton Club* (Robson Books, £9.50 & £6.50), the book that begat the film. It details almost everything (including the cost of a steak sandwich: $1.25 in 1931) from the opening in 1923, when Jack Johnson, former heavyweight champion of the world, acted as mine host, up to the closure in the summer of 1940, by which time the club had moved downtown, close to Broadway, and was letting black patrons in. (Prohibition had ended in December 1933; less profit could be made from shifting liquor.) And the book provides an intriguing reversal of an episode in the film, in which the club's bullying back-stage manager is thumped by a black tap-dancer before having his head pushed down a lavatory pan and the chain pulled. Exactly the same thing happened to Lena Horne's step-father in 1934, after the management was told that Lena wanted to leave the show.

The film's sound-track is about to surface on an LP, with full-length versions of many Ellington pieces yet not, oddly enough, any of Richard Gere's Bixish cornet solos (coached by Warren Vaché, he turns in surprisingly doughty performances). Two albums, however, offer original recordings of the period. **The Cotton Club** (Academy Sound & Vision AVA 5031) contains some early Ellington, Cab Calloway hi-de-hoing through 'Kickin' The Gong Around', Harold Arlen, one of the club's resident songwriters, singing his most famous number, 'Stormy Weather', and a few less relevant tracks, including Midge Williams, recorded in Tokyo, singing 'Lazy Bones' in Japanese. **Cotton Club Stars** (Stash/Milan A252/3, 2 LPs) has a longer historical stretch, from pre-Ellington bands up to Sister Rosetta Tharpe belting out a gospel song with Lucky Millinder's Orchestra. Bojangles Robinson turns up once again, the wizardry of his tap-dancing scarcely flattered by 1930s recording. And 'Stormy Weather' is represented by a sound-track from a 1933 movie, Duke Ellington's band playing, Ivie Anderson singing in an aloofly delectable way.

Throughout most of the period covered by the film, Ellington, in common with quite a few other important black artists, was managed by Irving Mills, who died last month, aged 91. Mills's role was enigmatic and often decried. Ellington wrote the music, it was said, while Mills kept a list of suitable tune titles, for which task he collared a half-share of the composer's royalties. Yet without Mills pushing the band — sometimes quite ruthlessly — in the early years things might have turned out very differently. On Monday 13 May, Duke Ellington will be at last installed as Radio Three's Composer of the Week. One can be certain that he will not be announced as Irving Mills, at his brashest, ostensibly at the Cotton Club, introduces him on these LPs: 'The greatest living master of jungle music, the riproaring harmony hound, none other than Duke Ellington. Take your bow, Dukie!' □

ART

On appeal

John Spurling

Edward Lear 1812-1888
RA

TO FAIL completely, like the Romantic history painter Benjamin Robert Haydon, may not be the saddest fate for an artist. The saddest is perhaps to aspire to be a serious artist and be celebrated as a clown, like W. S. Gilbert or Edward Lear. The RA, with an oddly assorted troika of sponsors (Swan Hellenic, Trusthouse Forte and Walker Books), is now giving Lear the greatest opportunity he has ever had to be reassessed as a serious artist.

The appeal opens well. How could one not feel instinctive sympathy with a 20th child (out of 21) whose father defaulted on the Stock Exchange, whose mother left his upbringing entirely to his oldest sister and whose life-long ailments included epilepsy, short sight, bronchitis, asthma and bouts of depression? Then, after the usual scraps of juvenilia, comes a piece of telling evidence for his talent and originality: a row of brave, bright parrots, drawn from the life (in London Zoo) at the age of 19 for his own publication *Illustrations of the Family of Psittacidae*, the first work of its kind ever devoted to a single family. Indeed, three types of parrot were actually named after Lear on the strength of his contribution to parrot scholarship. Alas, though, some of the preliminary studies are also decorated with little caricatures and comic doodles in fainter pencil, demonstrating even this early the appellant's unlucky penchant for whimsy.

However, the second revelation follows immediately: a selection from the 100 or so watercolours which Lear made of the creatures in Lord Derby's private menagerie at Knowsley Hall. What the parrots already suggested, these paintings confirm: Lear could see and draw birds and beasts not just as representatives of their family, but as living individuals: his Tree Squirrel, his Eyed Tyrse and, above all, his Spectacled Owl are masterpieces of animal, reptile and bird portraiture.

Lear may have been unfortunate in his health and in not having a private income, but he was extraordinarily fortunate all his life in his friends and patrons. Lord Derby, who had supported him for six years while he worked in the menagerie, sent him, in 1837, to Rome, both for the sake of his health and to assist his new ambition to be a landscape painter. In 1873-5 Lear visited India at the invitation of Lord Northbrook, the new Viceroy. Queen Victoria, on the strength of his books of travel illustrations, summoned Lear to give her drawing lessons. Tennyson, whose poems Lear both illustrated and set to music, wrote a special poem for him and Holman Hunt taught him to paint Pre-Raphaelite oils. Many other well-wishing and well-heeled fans commissioned paintings and helped to subsidise his extensive travels in the Mediterranean, the Middle East and India. When he finally settled in San Remo in 1870 he had saved enough to build a house to his own design and when, nine years later, a hotel was built between his house and the sea, Lords Derby and Northbrook contributed towards the cost of building a new house of the same design with an uninterrupted view.

Lear began drawing landscapes in Sussex, Ireland and the Lake District but, although his sensibility remained essentially that of an English watercolourist (a combination of delicacy, romanticism and precision) and his technique traditionally British (in spite of a brief foray into Pre-Raphaelite colours and *plein-airisme*), his mature work is all of foreign parts. Much in the same spirit as he had catalogued the family of parrots and the wonderful variety of Lord Derby's zoo he set out to compile a traveller's guide to some of the more exotic places of the 19th-century tourist's world. These landscapes became the purpose of his life and, compared to them, the nonsense rhymes, comic drawings, children's alphabets and even the longer and more poignant nonsense poems (the Jumblies, the Dong, etc.) were mere piffle before the wind, though piffle which (as the whimsical letters in funny spelling make clear) was an essential part of his defences against the world.

Lear's nonsense output is fully and delightfully covered by this exhibition, but the landscapes are rightly given pride of place, since they are the heart of the case for Lear's reputation as a serious artist. They do not on the whole sustain it. To choose the picturesque or the astonishing as a subject is always a dubious advantage to an artist and most of the greatest landscape artists have preferred places in themselves quite ordinary and uncomposed. Lear's painting was not unappreciated in his own day, though he considered that it was and became so contemptuous of his public that he manufactured watercolours 60 at a time to sell for his living; but, to our eyes, jaded with easy travel and glossy photography, it is inevitably less novel because of its dependence on spectacle rather than insight. The rare exceptions — an intimate study of tree roots, a strange ghostly view of Beachy Head, romantically Gothic drawings of Tivoli, Amalfi and the Forest of Bavella, a magnificent hill-top panorama of Jerusalem floating against blue distance — in which topography is subordinated to feeling, stand out in this exhibition but would not in the company of more original artists.

Sadly, reluctantly, the appeal court is driven to conclude that dear Mr Lear, though he was a most talented artist and an indefatigable traveller, was first and foremost a funny man and so must remain. □

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Cliff Harper

Hols with Them

Michael Rosen

LAST SUMMER J. suggested we might like to go with her on holiday — drive down through France, you know, on to Italy... perhaps on to Yugoslavia...? People don't realise what it's like to be locked up in a Renault 4 with two boys (eight and four). The Jolly Life on the Road soon turns into Hell on Wheels. It's not that the two little fellers don't get on with each other, it's just that their little creative games like nose-stroking and baby-minding quickly escalate into leg-biting and ear-ripping, followed by the dull chant, 'I want a drink, I want a drink, I want a drink.' Some other kind of holiday has to be conceived of.

So we draw up Necessary Conditions of Hols with Them:

i) Four hours a day minimum for running and yelling.

ii) Access to a shop selling dracula teeth and lollies.

iii) Many sticks and stones nearby.

iv) A large historical thing to be climbed on/up/in/through/over.

Northumberland seemed to fit the bill. Castles, beaches, woods, ancient forts, fish and chip shops, islands, farms, deserted railways and country shows. And, yes, it was perfect. Well — nearly.

I mean, anyone could break a cistern in a holiday cottage toilet, couldn't they? 'Dad, I pushed the lever up and it clicked...' We looked in. The bit that's supposed to stick up had imploded. Panic: plumber's bills? copybook blotted...Family to be banned from the place for ever more? So we moved in with a pair of tweezers and a mounted needle from my old A-level dissection kit, 20 years old. We hoked and hoiked, we became very nasty to each other, broke into hysterical laughter and finally hooked the diddle through the bobble. One bill saved... 'Don't worry, son, it could have happened to anyone.' Could it?

On the £1.50 excursion to the Farne Islands and Grace Darling's lighthouse, a kid found a rusty lever sticking out of the floor of the boat and he heaved on it. He must have thought, 'What else do you do with a lever?' It was the clutch, for use when doing your business with lobster pots. The boatman leapt out of his boathouse and shouted, 'Let go of that thing.' The kid's eyes popped out and his hands stuck themselves to the lever. The boat stopped and the engine started revving wildly. Twenty people stared at the kid. The engine was roaring. 'Let go of that thing, will you,' the man shouted again. The kid was trying to push the lever back into place. The boatman started heading for him. Then the kid let go. Everyone looked at one another and then out to sea, busy pretending that we hadn't thought that the lever opened up a panel in the bottom of the boat to let the waves in. I was just saying over and over again: 'Thank god that kid wasn't one of ours. He wasn't one of ours.' The woman opposite me was saying out loud, 'Of course it was one of ours.' And she had seven of them to worry about.

Ours are more interested in 'picking up' than pulling levers. 'Mike,' says Joe, coming towards me with something in his hand, 'look at this terrific green slimy stuff I've found. What is it?' 'Sheep shit, Joe.' 'Oh,' he says, scarcely dismayed. 'Mike,' says Eddie, the four-year-old, 'I've got a treasure. Shut your eyes and I'll put it in your hand.... you can open them now.' It's a half-used sachet of brown sauce, dripping into the palm of my hand. 'Can we put it in our museum?' he says. He may be talking about some long-forgotten madly educational project S. and I had or maybe he's talking about the stuff on the floor of the car: the apple cores, the 'Lilt' cans, Shell Petrol Win-a-million cards, dracula teeth, rabbit skulls and badges from things like The North Tyne and Redewater Twisty Road Preservation Society. I look at the Brown Sauce Treasure. 'Maybe not this one, eh Eddie?'

Poor old Eddie. We went to the Roman fort at Housesteads where the two main attractions were the ruins of i) the Roman latrine and ii) the National Trust's latrine. The first latrine ruin was due to ancient Britons who, we explained, were probably no worse a bunch of folks than the Romans, and the second latrine ruin was due, we were informed, to a tramps' arson attack last summer. We didn't say to the boys that the tramps were probably ancient Britons as well because that would have led to prejudice and misunderstanding. I did wonder though. We all looked at a beautiful colour pic of Romans collectively crapping in their lat in the book *Housesteads in the Days of the Romans*. We looked over the fence at the blackened stones of the National Trust's ex-latrine. That night Eddie had a nightmare. He was burnt to death in a toilet by ancient Britons. Joe was OK, though. He found a shop that sold dracula teeth *with* blood capsules in the heart of the Northumberland National Park, so *he* wants to go to Northumberland again.

I think Eddie would like to as well. He got over the nightmare because a couple of days later he told us that his plate of mash with a Cumberland sausage lying across it was, of course, Hadrian's Wall. And he had liked Bamburgh Castle, that vast antique shop disguised as a prison. He found The Sedan Chair. Eddie has for years, when he's wanted to be picked up, said 'Uppy uppy'. He looked at the sedan chair and said (loudly enough to annoy someone bending his head reverentially towards his Lordship's medal for barbarities in Kenya), 'Is that how they did uppy uppy in the old days?' Maybe he thinks the ancient Britons went about in sedan chairs. What the hell. □

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Naseem Khan

Roots

IT HAPPENS in storybooks but not so often in real life: someone buys a cheap job lot and discovers treasure at the bottom. Roger Kitchen's treasure, however, wasn't an old master or a first edition. Under a pile of books being sold off after the death of a local woman, he found a bundle of letters.

They dated back to the First World War and were from her young brother Albert, who'd lied about his age (said he was 18 when he was only 16) in order to get into the army. It's not a fat volume that is now behind cellophane in Milton Keynes's Living Archive Project. For poor Albert, his letters full of lively-minded observations ('It rains very frequently [in France], I don't know whether the explosion of the shells have anything to do with it'), did not last long. A week before his 17th birthday, four bullets hit him as he was sandbagging the parapet of the dugout (cheerily called 'Musty Villa'). He died at once.

Some people might think the scrappy letters from an unknown soldier worthless. For Kitchen they were pure gold, given the way in which his life was developing. An increasingly disgruntled community worker, he had, largely by accident, discovered the techniques of living history. Fired by the example of London's community publishing venture Centreprise, he'd founded Milton Keynes's People's Press. 'Pianos and Herrings', the taped story of Bill Elliott, a retired railway worker, had already resulted. The imprint today has 17 titles to its credit — a mixture of taped memoirs, albums, autobiographies and children's writings — but when Kitchen acquired the Albert French letters their expertise was still patchy.

What Kitchen really wanted to do was to turn the letters into a play. But how to do it? When a researcher arrived at his doorstep looking for material for a local documentary play, it seemed almost too good to be true. In fact, his letters weren't used in 'All Change', but what they did do was bring Kitchen together with Roy Nevitt and bring the Living Archive Project a step or so nearer.

For while Kitchen was busily recording in one part of Milton Keynes, Roy and his wife Maggie were feeling their way along similar lines (inspired, in their case, by Peter Cheesman's striking documentary dramas at Stoke-on-Trent) in another part of the town. They'd already devised one drama, an account of the famous Bursten school strike. When Kitchen turned up with his Albert French letters, they were in the midst of planning one of their most ambitious projects. They'd started off gathering material in a non-focussed way, from the Domesday-book to the present day, but had homed in on one period and one place: Wolverton (one of Milton Keynes's four towns and 13 villages) between 1830 and 1860. A time of growth and immigration, it mirrored in many ways present-day issues. The Albert letters however had a different fate.

First they were used by Nevitt to demonstrate how to turn raw material into documentaries in a well-attended conference in 1980. Next they were turned into a studio production, 'Your Loving Brother Albert'. A radio documentary (by Kitchen) followed and a publication and, last autumn, an extremely popular schools version by Nevitt's new TIE team, Theatre of Fact. Rarely could a 16-year-old's letters have had such a sustained effect.

It is, of course, not hard to understand why they should have proved so rich a vein for Kitchen and the Nevitts. The Living Archive Project bases itself exclusively and unshakably on documentary fact and primary source material. Limiting though the rule can be, they all feel that the compensations far outweigh any constrictions. Real words bring a vigour, they find, a freshness and a lack of artifice that carries its own eloquence. French was of course a prime example, but there have been others: Hawtin Munday, a local man whose memories, again of the First World War, led to 'Days of Pride', a production performed by 60 local people, 39 puppets, 30 musicians and 13 morrismen. 'Nellie' came from Nellie Abbey's 1901-1981 diaries. 'The Jovial Priest' recorded the life of a notorious local vicar. 'All Change', one of their most popular plays, is due to be revived in the autumn. All in all, there've been six local dramas and over 200 hours of taped reminiscences.

The process is a circular one. Local people research and relate their own history; it is then set in a form that brings it to a wider audience and becomes, again, part of local history. There is a satisfying economy about it and, hence, no great surprise that the community documentary play is growing in popularity. Plays from Corby, Coventry, Wheatley and Saffron Walden are imminent or in the planning. Plays from Epping, Islington, Fulham and Hammersmith (and, of course, Ann Jellicoe's Dorset plays) are in the recent past.

By the law of averages, some must be less satisfying than others. Simply involving hundreds does not *per se* make the venture a good one; only the naive would think so. The community play is like a camera: try to get too much in and you can end up with a mess. You need practice in positioning and framing and, above all, a rationale for what you are doing. Without it, there is not that much difference between a community documentary play and the trite tourist-based spread of the *son et lumière:* sound and fury, signifying nothing much.

What the Living Archive Project (formally known as the Milton Keynes Documentary Arts Trust) is doing is to hunt for and retrieve hidden tracts of history, not the grand stuff of battles and succession but the ordinary fabric of everyday life. 'If you dig where you stand,' said Nevitt confidently, 'you'll find a rich resource.' Not all the work is historical. Last 18 May, they got 600 local people to keep a record of their day. 'One Particular Journey', on at Milton Keynes's Stantonbury Campus from 22-25 May, draws on the material. History doesn't have to be about the dead. □

TELEVISION

Hugo Williams

O dear, o dear

THERE WAS A SENSE of achievement in being the last two little people in England left sitting in front of Jean-Paul Sartre's **Vicious Circle** (BBC-1) last Sunday night. After all, something interesting could have happened in the last two or three hours which no one else in the world except us would ever have seen. We could say anything we liked about the play. But what?

In our hearts we knew that author, title, period, language, set, music and star-heavy cast were less than promising, but we had made our bed. We must try not to go to sleep in it.

The play began as it went on, and vice versa. A large, blank set, furnished only with three ornate sofas, proclaimed it a play of ideas. Idea, rather: that hell is other people. Now where have I heard that one before?

In order to illustrate his theory of hell, Sartre seems to have decided to ignore the natural symbolism of a stage in favour of head-on statement: that this room is hell itself, i.e. specifically not on earth but squarely in the author's rather two-plus-two-equals-four type imagination, with sofas for school benches and abstractions in the place of human subtlety and interaction. Do Look! There aren't any windows or mirrors in hell! I never knew that! That must mean that 'characters' are obliged to find reflection only in one another's eyes, right? A telling dramatical insight there. The depth and subtlety of it can be appreciated at a glance, no?

Our three characters, who we know from the play's title are going to find hell squarely in each others' hellish company, begin by expressing surprise that there are no racks or pincers in hell. Bit naive, that, but they soon get the hang of conceptualising such things in the manner of Forties café *philosophes* and we're off to a poor start with such gems as 'How empty it is, a mirror without me in it'; 'I need to make others suffer so that I can exist'; 'Everything is a trap. I'm a trap'; 'You've stolen everything, even my face'; 'Am I really nothing any more?' (Lines which I'm told have improved in the translation.)

At one low point, Cherie Lunghi, a beautiful child murderess (probably conceptual) asks, 'Why have they taken away my toothbrush?' The question would have received howls of 'Because you're really dead!!!' from the audience of any children's pantomime, but Jeanne Moreau said it in grown-up: 'Why on earth would you want to brush your teeth if you don't exist?' This seemed to say it all, really, but the play had only just begun and was already repeating itself.

Just in case we hadn't got the idea through our thick skulls that hell is RIGHT HERE ON EARTH with its epicentre in the frontal lobes of St Germain's foremost existentialist, Moreau laid it on the line with a rare sally into metaphor: 'There's something missing here. They've cut

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down on staff. We have to serve ourselves, like in a cafeteria — each is the torturer of the other.' This, for Sartre, is poetry. Here's his usual level: 'Is it chance that brought us together? Chance that put three sofas here?' Of course it isn't. The whole wretched business has been worked out on a blackboard by Jean-Paul to illustrate his concept of the 'vicious circle' of courage versus conscience versus country versus something else that goes round and round in any great *philosophe's* brain and is his duty to express.

One can readily appreciate that it must be hellish to be cursed with the banality of ideas such as those expounded so exhaustively in *Vicious Circle* when everyone around you in the Café Flore seems to be more or less alive still and partaking of life's subtleties, but what can have persuaded him that it would make a play? 'All this must seem a bit abstract,' said Cherie Lunghi at one point, with more than adequate irony, I thought. On the other hand, if this is hell, how can it be entertaining? Neat, eh?

'WE INTELLECTUALS should stick together,' said Hancock generously in a long overdue *Omnibus* programme on our own premier modern philsopher. **From East Cheam to Earl's Court** (BBC-1) was no less remarkable for not having appeared ten years ago. 'Pretentious, pompous, conceited, insecure,' said Alan Simpson. He might have been describing Jean-Paul, except that 'he was just like the rest of us'. It was the whole point. 'It was a character created in Tony's image. We wanted to do a real truth story, with Tony as a true character.' I suppose it would be difficult to know what they were talking about if you'd never heard *Sunday Afternoon at Home*. 'Ah dear me. (Pause). O dear O dear O dear. (Pause) What's the time? Two o'clock? That all? Dear O dear. O dear O dear O dear. (Long pause) I'm fed up!' The extract, hilarious, touching, fresh, televisualised with shots of period Roberts radios sitting there doing nothing in black and white on long afternoons long ago in the Fifties, perfectly captured for me the awful afternoon angst that used to be so utterly dispelled by *Hhhhancock's Half Hour*.

The turning point in his career seems to have also been his moment of glory 'face to face' with the formidable John Freeman, whom he later came to think of as a father figure. 'You spend most of your time discarding, not gathering,' he seemed surprised to hear himself telling Freeman.

It wasn't long afterwards that he started the long process of discarding that ended with him discarding his life. First to go were Sid James, 23 Railway Cuttings, the Homburg hat and the Astrakhan collar. These were followed by his faithful scriptwriters Galton and Simpson, his director and finally the BBC itself. 'He'd started studying comparative religions,' said Eric Sykes. 'When you don't know where your gift comes from, even what it is, that's when you begin to ask yourself. . .'' He trailed off as the lonely, lost alcoholic Hancock must have trailed off in that last hotel room in Sydney five years after his last successful series. □

Salamanca 94

'Kit-Word'

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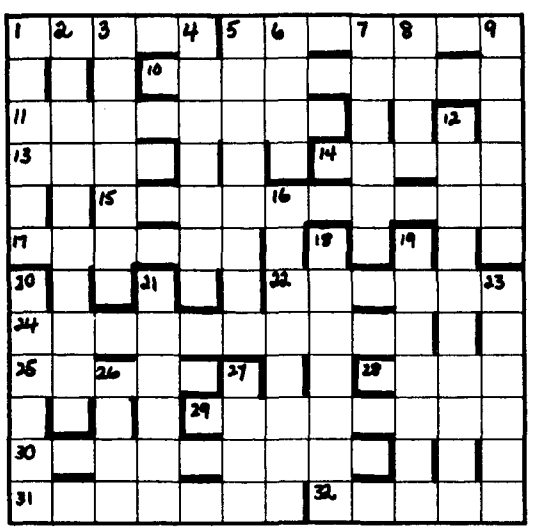

The definition part of each Across clue consisting of one or more words has been placed in another Across clue; likewise with the Downs. Punctuation is untrustworthy but all answers are entered normally and every word is in Chambers 1983 Edition. (For those interested, the first letter of each definition, taken in its correct order, provides a hint to the solution of KW's*****)

Name_____

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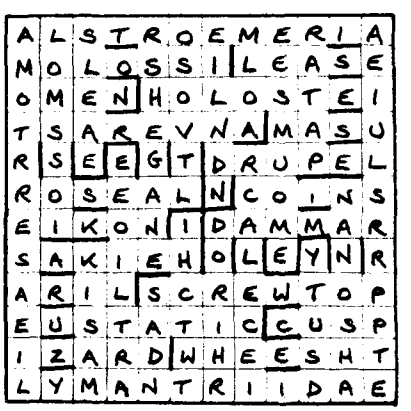
ACROSS

1 Animals hidden in Kit Williams' paintings (5)
KW5 Ideal for *Masquerade*, page shows hares scattering after first sign of storm (7)
KW10 Denizen of tropical America, see ivory emu squashed, with spade stuck in (9)
11 Fellow who pays hides Len, perhaps (8)
13 Nasty peeping essential to excitement (4)
KW14 Aquatic movements: see American 'cigar' with a reverse (5)
15 Singular re matter and spirit, showing one's gone crazy with extremes of insaneness (10)
KW17 Lineage, one Islam bred (6)
22 It's part of newspaper to conclude with thanks (6)
KW24 Overpraises Scots munch with noise remorselessly (10)
25 Evolution of mind: questions require marks, somehow (5)
KW28 River plant with a peculiar flavour or piquancy (4)
KW29 Orotundity: it's odd holding out first of mint's new coin (8)
30 Country seen when nurse nods casually (9)
KW31 Shelter me e.g. when taking in Latin (7)
32 Tree blooms i.e. when lowest part comes to the top (5)

DOWN

KW1 Carrying a handle, Leah is rattled (6)
2 Noble lover 'beaky' bird's swallowed in tangled net (10)
KW3 S.A. pedlar with nasty snare, one a bit churlish (7)
4 As before, not known in moose, given wild state (7)
5 Support urge to rush about in rising after climb (8)
KW6 Native Aussie's girl, one who's usable as an employee (4)
7 Entertainers who don't speak causing *guerra*, maybe (6)
KW8 May be rat killer Bob accepted by leader of SWAPO (4)
9 Departed with some change — contents are American (6)
KW12 Leafy palms in tree perch with nail (not whole one) set (10)
16 Abominable to cut up one who works at a depth (8)
KW18 Kind who never agrees finding love in tram is terrible (7)
19 End part of hare: it's grasped by Dante in panic (7)
20 Wickednesses, note, in villages a while ago (6)
21 One who inspects one's house is disreputable to leader of tourism (6)
23 It could describe mountain marble of South Africa, see, taking an age to climb (6)
26 Lumber very hard from this, i.e., about it is daintily pleasing (4)
KW27 Colourful and copying (?) prominent among gibbering onlookers' new experiences (4)

Solution to Salamanca 93



Acrosses enter normally (good), Downs enter in jumbled form (bad). Hyde answers: 1-3 same as first three Ac., 4 Shagreen, 5 Volost, 6 Dinnle, 7 Loma, 8 Mousemee, 9 Apart, 10 Pleasure-trip, 17 Aerolite, 19 Celeriac, 22 Hosanna, 24 Twitch, 25 Horrid, 27 Kamis, 28 Study, 30 Dans.

Prizewinners to Salamanca 93

S. Gibbs (Bedford)
J. F. Grimshaw (London SW18)
Mrs H. Lee (Colwyn Bay)

The solution and prizewinners to Crossword 1476 will appear next week.

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Weekend competition

No 2871 Set by E. O. Parrott

Wanted, extracts from school stories, set at any famous fictional school, in which Sir Keith Joseph and/or his policies are discussed. Max. 150 words by 15 May.

No 2868 Set by George Cowley

Succinct summings-up of religions, political theories or philosophies.

Report By Ernest Oswald fflap

When I rang my dear old mamma just now to enquire what she fancied for her dinner (raspberries, she said, having doubtless performed some speedy mental arithmetic and calculated that they couldn't *quite* be in season), I also, knowing her views on religion, politics and theories in general, read her a handful of your entries. Our man of medicine is even now extracting her dentures from the nasal cavities whither her laughter projected them. That said, I feel compelled to add that for every hit we have printed below (two pounds per published entry to the authors) there were mountains of sometimes arduously laboured, sometimes simply baffling, misses. But then, we can't all be aphorists, can we? Each to her or his talents.

McCarthyism: Government of the People by the Peephole.
Monarchy: One for All and All for One.

Genocide: A race to the finish.
GERARD BENSON

Apartheid is a Plague on Botha houses.
ALAN CLARK

Militant Tendency is a vulgar fraction.
NICHOLAS MURRAY

Conservatism: Profits without honour.
BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

Catholicism: A quasi-financial institution that encourages deposits but bans withdrawals.
Jehovah's Witnesses: 'Don't knock us. . .we'll knock you.'
RUSSELL LUCAS

Capitalism is manufactured in London, Paris and New York.
JOHN WOOD

Economic liberalism: If I'm all right, Jack's probably all right too.
PETER NORMAN

Catholicism is either rhythm or blues.
CHRIS MCSHEEHY

Catholicism has mass appeal.
R. J. PICKLES

SDP-ism: Neither left, nor right, but wrong.
GERALDINE AHERN

Logical Positivism: The triumph of linguistics over metaphysics.
STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

Humanism embodies the principles of Christianity — without the carrots.
FRANK LANNING

Anglicanism is a matter of opinion.
Anarchism doesn't rule. OK?
Existentialism is never having to say you're sorry.
MARGARET ROGERS

Trappism is set down in strong silent type.
WILL BELLENGER

Spiritualism: The Medium has the Message.
Monetarism: Take care of the pounds and the poor can take care of the pence.
JOHN SWEETMAN

Zen is seeking nothing and meditating on what you'll do if you find it.
FRANCES DOVER

Philosophy is thinking about thinking about thinking.
DIDO BAGSHAW

Among this week's contributors:

MICHAEL ROSEN's most recent book for children was *Hairy Tales and Nursery Crimes* (Deutsch). He devised and presented Channel 4's *Black and White and Read All Over.*

SARA MAITLAND's most recent novel was *Virgin Territory* (Michael Joseph).

ZHANA is a founding member of the Black Women's Writing Workshop. She is currently working on the first issue of the *Funky Black Women's Journal.*

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APPOINTMENTS

New Statesman

We are looking for a bright, energetic and adaptable person to work in our accounts department.

The job covers the full range of the department from paying contributors to writing up the nominal ledger and taking out a trial balance. Some computer input will also be involved.

Salary **c£8,750 pa + 5 weeks holiday.**

If you want a broadly based accounts job with the real opportunity to make your mark, please ring

Ted Peacock on 01-253 2001

OV SELECTION have a number of vacancies for temporary & permanent office staff with typing skills. We welcome enquiries from mature people as well as College leavers. Phone Odette Veazey, OV Selection (Emp. Agy), Abford House, 15 Wilton Road, London SW1V 1LT. 01-828 8345.

Please mention NEW STATESMAN when replying to advertisements

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THE LABOUR PARTY
CAMPAIGN OFFICER —
Parliamentary Labour Party

Applications are sought from members of the Labour Party for the post of Campaign Officer, Parliamentary Labour Party. The successful applicant will join the two Parliamentary Committee Clerks as a member of the Parliamentary Labour Party staff, answerable for the fulfilment of her/his duties to the Secretary of the PLP as Head of Department and through him to the General Secretary and the National Executive Committee.

A major aspect of the PLP Campaign Officer's role will be to promote liaison between the PLP Campaign Unit and the Campaign Unit at Head Office and the National Agent's Department and Regional Offices, especially in arranging the deployment of MPs and other leading figures in the Party to campaigning and public engagements throughout the country, in setting up events and ensuring maximum public impact. The Officer will join the Parliamentary Committee Clerks in promoting the activities of the PLP Regional Groups and Departmental Committees.

Administrative support will be afforded at the House of Commons, where the PLP computer will be used to develop a long running schedule of Party and public functions to be serviced and also at Head Office where arrangements will be made to process speaker requests received through Head Office channels.

Salary range, inclusive of London Weighting, **£10,440-£12,110 p.a.**, dependent on appropriate experience in a similar capacity. (Salary subject to increase from **1 May, 1985.**)

Application forms are available from: **The Administrative and Personnel Officer, The Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT (tel. 01-703 1064)** and should be returned by first post on **Monday, 13 May, 1985.**

The Labour Party is an equal opportunities employer.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DEPARTMENT

Manager of Support Unit

Police Sub-Committee
£14,574-£15,606 pa (inc.) + casual user car allowance

The Council's Police Sub-Committee is looking for a person of proven managerial talent to work alongside the Police Policy Adviser to implement the Sub-Committee's work programme. We need someone who can supervise (as well as take part in) research and campaigning on police issues in a small, but powerful unit, *working in an important, but constantly challenging field.*

The Sub-Committee has prioritised (a) the evolution of an Alternative Strategy plan for the borough and (b) an exhaustive review of Council/Police Contacts as its main areas of work over the next two years.

If you can work co-operatively and yet have managerial responsibility in this demanding but satisfying area of local authority initiative we want you to apply.

A commitment to democratic accountability of the Metropolitan Police is essential. Managerial experience in this or related fields (civil liberties, community groups etc) could be an advantage.

Application form (and further details) from and to be returned to: Controller of Personnel Services, Town Hall, Euston Road, London NW1 2RU. Tel: 01-278-4444 quoting reference no. 1A/339/NS. Closing date: 20 May, 1985.

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to work in its London-based International Secretariat

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Fluent Arabic and English are essential. Another language of the region would be useful. Executive Assistants must be able to type.

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For a detailed job specification and application form, please contact the Personnel Office, Amnesty International, International Secretariat, 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 8DJ. Tel: (01) 837 3805 (24 hours) telex 28502.

Closing date for the return of completed application forms: **7 June 1985**

HOLIDAYS/TRAVEL

ARCHAEOLOGY. Digging in Dumfries — comfort and countryside. Beginners welcome. AAA, 12 Copson St, Manchester 20. 061-445 0998.

BUDLEIGH SALTERTON. Cottage overlooking mouth of River Otter and sea (2 mins). Sleeps 4. Gas, TV etc. From £80 p.w. 01-435 0171.

CHEAPEST FARES. Paris, Caracas, Port of Spain, Singapore, Sydney, Hong Kong, Jo'burg, Nairobi, Istanbul, anywhere. Fareplan, 60-66 Wardour Street, W1. 01-734 9772.

CUBA SPECIAL. Two weeks holiday including six day tour plus seven days hotel beach resort. Departing 26 May. £595 per person. Must book now. Ashley Holidays, 131a Bawtry Rd, Wickersley, Rotherham. 0709 543626.

HERITAGE EAST ANGLIA. Beautiful village. Simple, quiet cottage, sleeps 3. £55 p.w. Half hour Saffron Walden. Dates June onwards. Details s.a.e.: Keyte, 2 Fountain Terrace, Great Saxfield, Braintree, Essex CM7 4RH.

JOURNEY LATIN AMERICA. Low cost flights, holiday journeys. 3-6 weeks. JLA, 16 Devonshire Road, London W4 2HD. 01-747 3108.

PRIMITIVE MILL in mountains Southern Spain. Sleeps 5. £12 to £45 p.w. 01-247 4529.

RELAX IN a 16th century half-moated farmhouse with vegetarian/wholefood cuisine. Veronica & George Bailey, Meadow Farm, Stradbroke, Suffolk. Tel. 037 984 287.

TRIED THE REST, now try the best. For low air fares to world-wide destinations inc. Africa. SHL, 313A Hoe St, London E17. 01-520 7911.

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APPOINTMENT VACANT

THE WOMEN'S FILM, TELEVISION & VIDEO NETWORK (WFTVN), a national campaigning and information network requires Co-ordinator/Information Officer (dependent on GLC funding). The person will be responsible for the day to day and overall administration of WFTVN. All this to be done in 35 hours per week at £9,700 p.a. This post requires someone with administrative flair, political vision and a commitment to women. A knowledge of film, television and video is desirable but not essential. For further information please send s.a.e. to: WFTVN, c/o 112 Muswell Hill Road, London N10 3JD. Closing date: 15 May 1985.

ACCOMMODATION VACANT

VEGETARIAN TO share small house, Edgware. C/h., £120 p.c.m. Tel. 01-211 6032 (day) or 01-906 0039 (eves).

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WRITER SEEKS inexpensive accommodation, preferably self-contained, in London. 01-740 7639 or Box (18)0749.

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AMUSING, INTELLIGENT, idealistic, single male, youthful 40, loves travel, countryside, arts, spontaneity, cheerfulness, seeks attractive, educated lady, 20s-30s, to share pursuits. Box (18)0764.

HEARTSEARCH

AFFECTIONATE MALE, 35, graduate, bearded, spectacled, single, slim, non-smoker, interested classical music, literature, art, countryside, current affairs, seeks intelligent London female for loving, long-term relationship. Box (17)0724.

'ATTRACTIVE' WOMAN, 30, psychologist, PhD, seeks warm-hearted, unattached man, non-smoker? Photo appreciated (returned). Box (18)0741.

RATES & INFORMATION

Standard Rates: £9.80 per cm, £8.60 (charities) min. 3cms.

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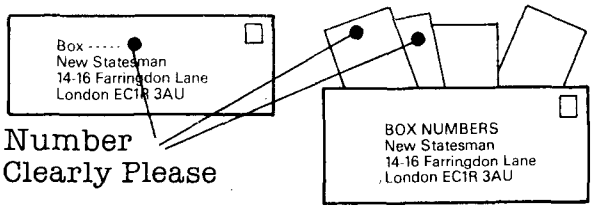

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ARE YOU a lively minded individual, 18-80, enjoying the arts, discussions, conferences, rambles, dancing? The Progressive League caters for Mind, Body and intellectual Stimulus. And it's so cheap. Ring 01-452 8358.

BIRMINGHAM AREA? Single, professional female, (non-smoker) seeks similar male, (25-35), to enhance current lonely existence. Likes: quiet pubs, animals, countryside, walking, eating out. Box (18)0778.

BIRMINGHAM MAN, 31, Labour socialist, lecturer, presentable Aquarian; currently lacking direction and misses female company. Seeks interesting woman for evenings together and perhaps more. Box (18)0740.

CHARISMATIC, INTELLIGENT & sensitive 42 year-old divorcee, with wide interests, would like to meet man, 40s-50s, for friendship/companionship. Central London. Box (18)0746.

CONTINENTAL LADY, mid-fifties, widow, attractive, 5' 6", self-employed, seeks reliable male companion, for: country walks, cinema & other pleasures of life. NW London. Box (18)0752.

CREATIVE, ADAPTABLE male designer, divorced, 46, presentable, 5' 8", drives, no ties. London (flexible) based, work featured TV, patents owned. Seeks special, sincere, intelligent, attractive female, independent, very solvent, for purposeful relationship. Box (17)0684.

DATELINE'S PSYCHOLOGICALLY accurate introductions lead to pleasant friendships, *spontaneous affairs and firm, lasting* relationships including marriage. All ages, all areas. Free details: Dateline Computer Dating, Dept. (7NS), 23 Abingdon Rd, London W8. Tel. 01-938 1011.

DISTINGUISHED LAWYER, tall, youthful, fiftyish, well-travelled, sincere, humorous and caring socialist, seeks pleasant, extremely large, lady any age or status, for long-term caring relationship — London area. All letters answered. Box (18)0753.

ENTERPRISING PROFESSIONAL widow, London-based, tall, very presentable and educated, financially independent, with wide interests especially in music, seeks similar unattached man, 50-65, for companionship, travel and hopefully a close relationship. Box (18)0779.

FEMALE ART teacher, 42, regrets consistently *resisting domesticity. Hopes to meet nice,* ordinary man, maybe writer, academic, artist, possibly parent. Interests: films, reading, countryside. Box (18)0780.

FEMALE GRADUATE, 31, (London), fairly attractive, seeks caring, educated, unmaterialistic, country-loving, thinking, feeling, communicating, socialist man, with many interests, casual not smart. Photo? Box (17)0695.

FEMALE PROLETARIATE, 33, with two children, into yoga, CND and all positive acts, wishes to meet affectionate, intelligent man (who will make me laugh again!). Photo. Box (18)0760.

FRIENDLY, AFFECTIONATE, happy, professional woman (30), would like to meet older, caring, gentle, amusing, non-egocentric man for easy, warm relationship. London. Box (18)0756.

GENTLEMAN 30s, London, tall, elegant, distinctive, attractive, interests: reading, 20s, 30s, 40s music/cinema, wishes to hear from pretty, well-built, shapely lady, genuine good accent. Box (18)0744.

GENTLEMAN'S AIDE seeks interesting position with gay author/gourmet. Read/type/drive/cook/home care/travel/talk *metaphysics/ meditate/ paint/ decorate/* garden etc. Box (16)0673.

22 YEAR-OLD male failure (with heady ambitions), in search of change of lifestyle, recklessly seeks two intelligent females for a sharing of lives (?). Any age, colour, shoe-size, but no Terry and June fans. Medwayish. Box (18)0782.

HEARTSEARCHERS UNITE! Form associations. I'll start 'Northern 45 Upwards Group'. Discussion weekend my place. Balanced numbers both sexes. Bring food. Group travel arranged. Box (18)0766.

KINDNESS IN women, not their beauteous looks shall win my love (beauty helps). I'm male, 40, professional with Scottish base: unwimpish, strong and presentable, but gentle and vulnerable: passion for communication. Is there a fellow risk-taker? Box (17) 0707.

LADY IN Devon wishes to be lady in heaven, possessed of two cherubim and devilish aspirations re: independence, writing, men. Heavenly bodies/archangels preferred. Box (18)0769.

LECTURER, 46, divorced, single parent. Enjoys music, theatre, walking, badminton and much more. Seeks lady to share same and probably more. Lives Staffs, works Leics. Box (17)0706.

LONDON FEMALE (25), researcher, seeks humorous male (25-40), to confirm or deny cynical view of life. Interests: theatre, cinema, music, cycling, travel, Tai Chi. Photo? Box (18)0781.

MALE PARAGON sought by fascinating, experienced but now lonely woman in her fifties. Must be tall, in 50s/60s, caring, humorous, solvent, unattached, living in London area, interested in the arts, current affairs, having fun, talking, driving out to country pubs for Sunday lunch. Assured but not flashy, in charge but not dominating. Box (17)0687.

MALE UNDERGRADUATE, 24, London based, Cheshire home, seeks attractive, intelligent female, London or Manchester areas, for friendship/love. I am (foolishly?) romantic, good-looking, caring, with wide interests. Box (18) 0755.

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN, 49, interesting career, needing extend social life, varied interests, wishes to meet unattached, personable man, 45-55. Box (16)0676.

ROLE-REVERSAL? Male, 33, enjoys housework, seeks career-minded woman, interested in acquiring a 'male au pair' or 'househusband'. Box (18)0742.

SINGLE PLUMP, attractive, Malaysian female, 45, seeks genuine left-wing male, interests in Third World countries, food, travel, and long-term caring, committed relationship. London. Box (16)0653.

SLIM, ATTRACTIVE, vivacious, 51 year-old woman, returning London, seeks compatible male to enjoy winebars, theatre, concerts, street markets, secondhand book shops and country expeditions. All the more fun with right company. Box (18)0757.

SOFT, SENSITIVE and sexy lady, 44, seeks a cool and groovy guy, with more money than sense, who likes the blues and loves a challenge. Box (18)0770.

SPRING IS the worst time to be alone. Intelligent, artistic male (28), seeks someone to share his passion for Mozart, Wagner, Kafka and Rilke. Box (18)0743.

SUCCESSFUL PROFESSIONAL man, many opportunities to travel Europe, America, Asia, wide interests, non-smoker, fifty, divorced, seeks intelligent attractive woman, similar age or younger, N. London/Herts, for companionship, travel, love, marriage. Box (17)0709.

THE MARRIAGE BUREAU (Heather Jenner), 124 New Bond St, W1. 01-629 9634. Individual attention.

WARM-HEARTED Male, 50, seeks attractive, sincere female, 25/45 for caring relationship. Phone/photo appreciated. London. Box (18)0765.

WARM, INTELLIGENT, socialist female (30), seeks sincere, kind, *affectionate male,* 25-35, willing to share social & outdoor pursuits, at a leisurely pace. North West area. Box (18)0739.

WOMAN, 48, marriage crumbling but own fabric adequately maintained, would like to meet intelligent, active man (similar period/state of repair), with possible view to some form of joint construction. Box (18)0745.

POLITICAL PUBLICATIONS

will next appear in our issue dated 17 May.

To advertise, phone **Michael Roberts** on **01-253 2001.**

Deadline for bookings: 10 May.

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LISTINGS

FRI 3 MAY

CRICKLEWOOD Miners Benefit for sacked and imprisoned miners. 8pm-midnight Cricklewood Hotel, Cricklewood Broadway, NW2. Disco plus Ronnie Golden & Botswana Girls. Bar/food. Adm. £3/£1 UB40.

LONDON Protest outside Polish Embassy, 47 Portland Place, W1 6.30pm against 5 year sentence on Solidarnosc defence lawyer Ewa Juszko-Patubska and against the trials of Solidarity leaders Bogdan Lis, Adam Michnik and Wladyslaw Frasyniuk. **Org. Polish Solidarity Campaign 01-471 9096.**

LONDON 'Hands off Cirus Noor' picket Home Office Prison Dept. 12.30-2pm 89 Ecclestone Sq, SW1. **Org. Cirus Noor Defence Campaign, 380 Old St, EC1. 01-739 8549.**

SAT 4 MAY

LONDON Creating Conditions for Peace — *the Role of Education. 10am-4.30pm Quaker* International Centre, 1 Byng Place, WC1. **Details: Mildred Mashedar, 13 Well Walk, NW3. 01-435 2182.**

BIRMINGHAM 'Reaching the public' day school. 9.30am-5.30pm, St Francis Hall, B'ham Univ. Adm £2 CND Peace Group reps/£1 UB40. **Org West Midlands Region CND 021-643 4617/632 6909.**

BLAENAU FFESTINIOG May Day rally 1.30pm town centre. Spkrs. incl. D. E. Thomas MP. Evening concert Steve Eaves rock grp. Queen's Hotel. Adm. £2/50p UB40. **Details: Tony Heath, 72 High St, Blaenau Ffestiniog, N. Wales. 0766 830018.**

LONDON Fighting for Jobs — Lessons of the Miners Strike — CSE-Socialist Day School 10.30am-4pm University of London Union, Malet St, WC1. Adm. £2/1 UB40. **For creche and details: 01-671 6973.**

LONDON Militarisation of the Indian Ocean day-conf. 10.30am-6pm Africa Centre, 38 King St, WC2. Registration Fee £4/£2 UB40 Creche. **Details: 01-836 1973.**

MON 6 MAY

BOLTON May Day Festival 1pm-5pm Bolton Socialist Club, 16 Wood Street. Stalls, Exhibitions, Bar, Food, Children's Rm. 2pm Speeches from Bolton Trades Council on fighting cuts in Public Services. **Details: 0204 399494 (eves.)**

TUES 7 MAY

HACKNEY 'Traveller's Rights' public meeting to organise support for sites for *travellers in the borough. Spkrs. incl. Ernie* Roberts MP. 7.30pm Hackney Town Hall. Org. **Irish in Britain Representation Grp, Box 3, Centerprise, 136 Kingsland High St, E8.**

LONDON VE Day Rally of London District Communist Party. 7.30pm Friends House, Euston Rd, NW1.

WED 8 MAY

LONDON Jobs and the Land Market by Robin Murray, Economic Advisor GLC. 8pm County Hall, SE1. **Details: Labour Land Campaign, 20 Ryland Rd, NW5 3EA. 01-267 2245.**

LONDON London VE Day Festival of Reconciliation 2pm Cenotaph, Whitehall.

LONDON Inaugural Meeting of NW London Branch of Socialist Health Assoc. 7.30pm Paddington & N. Kensington CHC Office, 81 Westbourne Grove, W2.

LONDON Inaugural meeting of Bexley & Greenwich Branch of SHA 7.30pm Town Hall Wellington St, SW18. 8pm Public Meeting 'Cervical Smear Tests' by Dr. Wendy Savage.

COVENTRY VE DAY Public Meeting 7.30pm St. Mary's Hall with E. P. Thompson, Zhores Medvedev. 40-hour peace vigil in Cathedral ruins. **Details: END 0203-22487/73893.**

THUR 9 MAY

LIVERPOOL Tom Dalyell MP on 'The Truth behind The Falklands, Belgrano, Ponting & Murrell'. 7.45pm AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant. **Details: Mike Allen, Riverside Constituency Labour Party 051-207 0103.**

LONDON Concert for Ethiopia 7.30pm St James's Church, 197 Piccadilly. Adm £3/£2 UB40.

ROTHERHAM Public meeting on Civil Liberties. Spkrs Kevin Barron MP, Mehmet Ali Dikerdem, Anne Rittingale. 7.30pm, Rotherham Library & Arts Centre. **Org. Rotherham CND. Details: Sue Chant, Rotherham 554087.**

LONDON MI5's official secrets — showing of 20/20 Vision video documentary & discn led by Cathie Lloyd of Cities of London & Westminster Public Order Research Grp. 8pm, Paddington Labour Club, 39 Chippenham Rd, W9. **Org Miners' Support Grp for Westminster & the City/CLW PORG.**

SAT 11 MAY

LONDON 'Tigray — War, Famine & Revolution'. Day Conf. Cathedral Hall, Westminster Cathedral, Ambroseden Ave, SW1. Adm. £2/£1 UB40 at 10am. **Org. Tigray Solidarity Campaign, 12 Stansfield Rd, SW9.**

LONDON The Food Conference — politics of food production & nutrition. Spkrs. incl. Prof. Colin Spedding, Caroline Walker, Michael Meadowcroft MP. **Details: Liberal Ecology Grp. 77 Dresden Rd, N19 3BG. 01-272 5053.**

MANCHESTER 'Taking Liberties — Women & the State' 10am-5pm Polytechnic Students Union Building, Oxford Rd. Creche. Spkrs. incl. Jo Richardson MP, Hedy d'Ancona MEP, Margaret Hodge, Joan Lestor, Harriet Harman MP. Tickets: £3.50/£1.50 UB40. **Org. Labour Co-Ordinating Cttee. 9 Poland St, W1. 01-734 9520.**

LONDON Spring Conference 'Labour and Peace'. 9.30am-5.30pm, Birkbeck College, Malet St, WC1. Adm £1, all welcome. **Org Society for the Study of Labour History. Details:. David Englander, Arts Faculty, Open University, Milton Keynes.**

CAPENHURST, Wirral — BNFL Uranium Enrichment Plant. Rally & spkrs. 1.30pm-4pm. **Details: 051-708 7764.**

MANCHESTER 'Taking Liberties — Women and the State'. Spkrs. incl. Jo Richardson MP, Harriet Harman MP. 10am-5pm Manchester Poly. **Org. Labour Co-ordinating Cttee. 9 Poland St, London, W1.**

LONDON 'The 'Right' to Wage War' Conf. 10am Royal Soc. of Medicine, 1 Wimpole St, W1. **Details/registration: Roger Bysouth, 3rd Floor, Tress House, 3 Stamford St, SE1. 01-261 1266. Org. Medical Assoc. for Prevention of War.**

LONDON Rights of Women Annual General Meeting 10.30am-5pm 52-54 Featherstone St, EC1. Lunch/creche if booked in advance/disabled access/women only. **Details: ROW 01-251 6577.**

LONDON 'Psychoanalysis and the 'Perverse' — theoretical and historical perspectives. Spkrs: Jeffrey Weeks, Mandy Merck. 2-5pm Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, WC1. Adm. £1. **Details: Psychoanalysis & History Seminar Series, 43 Petherton Rd, N5.**

GREAT MALVERN 2-dy. Womens Peace Conference Malvern Hills College. Workshops, food, discns, creche, videos. **Details/accommodation/bookings: Malvern Women for Life On Earth 08864 203/06845 61465.**

FORTHCOMING

14 MAY CROYDON CND Meeting on Trident 8pm Ruskin House, 23 Combs Rd. **Details: Croydon CND 01-651 1891.**

Sorry, but we can't accept entries over the phone. Entries must be received by Friday preceding issue date. We reserve the right to exclude items without giving reasons and are not responsible for errors. Space is strictly limited so if you definitely want your item to appear, we suggest you book it as an ad under the appropriate classified heading. See main heading for rates, etc.

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MEDIA IN EDUCATION. The Association for Media Education in Scotland's second Journal includes articles on teaching STAR WARS — semiotics — curriculum innovations — a Media Studies approach to popular music — computer software — community radio — Walt Disney's finances — media's constructions of meaning — the West Highland Free Press — the Australian scene — news and reviews. £1.50 for one, £3 for two — incl. p & p. AMES Journal, Scottish Curriculum Development Service, Moray House College, Holyrood Road, Edinburgh EH8 8AQ.

PERSONAL

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THE PARTY by Trevor Griffiths "A riveting revival... one of the best English plays about politics since Shaw" *S Times* — returns 3-4 May, returns 17-18 May.

HALF MOON 213 Mile End Rd., 01-790 4000. Mons-Sats 8 p.m.
SWEENY TODD
by Stephen Sondheim.

NATIONAL THEATRE 01-928 2252
Olivier (open stage) 'Pravda — A Fleet Street Comedy', 'Coriolanus'. Lyttelton (proscenium stage) 'She Stoops to Conquer', 'Martine'. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 01-928 2256.

BLOOMSBURY THEATRE 01-387 9629. Tonight and tomorrow 7 p.m.
NATIONAL OPERA STUDIO, 7-11 May 8 p.m. **HARVEY & THE WALLBANGERS'** in their sparkling new show **LIKE MEN POSSESSED.**

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CONFERENCES

TAKING LIBERTIES CONFERENCE

A Labour Co-ordinating Committee Event for Socialism & Feminism
Saturday 11 May 10.30 a.m.-5 p.m.
Manchester Polytechnic Students' Union Building, 99 Oxford Rd, Manchester with —
Margaret Hodge, Hedy D'Ancona MEP, Jo Richardson MP, Harriet Harman MP, Joan Lestor.
Workshops on: **Fertility Rights, Unions, Immigration Widows, Policing, Benefits & Local Authorities.**
Registration: £3.50 (waged) £1.50 (unwaged) with
Labour Co-ordinating Committee, 9 Poland Street, London W1. Tel. 01-734 9520.

REGIONAL STRATEGIC PLANNING IN THE 1980s: PRACTICE AND PROSPECTS CONFERENCE, Friday 17 May, West Midlands County Hall, Birmingham. Speakers from SERPLAN, West Midlands Forum of CCs; D. Gill, Humberside CPO; K. Young, PSI; D. Eversley, R. Corrie. Conf. Fee £23 (RSA members £17.25). Details from Regional Studies Association, 29 Great James Street, WC1. Tel 01-242 0363.

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FINANCIAL

IMMEDIATE ADVANCES £100-£25,000. Written terms on request. Regional Trust Ltd, 31 Dover St, London W1A 4RT. 01-491 2934.

SALARIED PERSONS Postal Loans Ltd. Loans from £50. 175 Regent Street, London W1. For written quote apply: Tel. 01-734 1974.

MEETINGS

THE NICARAGUAN AMBASSADOR and others explain the situation facing Nicaragua today, on Saturday 11 May from 11 a.m. – 4.30 p.m. at Southwark Town Hall, Peckham Road, SE5. For information call Richard Balfe on 01-855 2128.

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for free pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Sunday 5 May 8 p.m. Public Talk 'Progress Through Reincarnation' Wed. 8 May, 7.30 p.m. 'White Lotus Day'. H.P. Blavatsky Commemoration. ULT, 62 Queen's Gdns, London W2.

TIGRAY: WAR, FAMINE AND REVOLUTION. Day Conference 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday 11 May. Susan George, John Markakis, James Petras, TPLF. Cathedral Hall, Westminster Cathedral, Ambrosden Ave, London SW1. (£2 waged, £1 unwaged). Organised by Tigray Solidarity Campaign, 12 Stansfield Rd, London SW9.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON (Gower St, WC1E 6BT). The Stewartson Memorial Lecture by Dr M. E. McIntyre 'The Lagrangian Description in Fluid Dynamics', Wed. 15 May at 4.30, Darwin Theatre. Admission free, without ticket.

SEMINAR

German Historical Institute, London
Tuesday 7 May 5 p.m.
Prof. Dr Klaus J. Bade (Osnabrück/Oxford)
Imperialism and Christian Missionaries. The German Experience before the First World War.
17 Bloomsbury Square
London WC1A 2LP
01-404 5486
Tea from 4.30 p.m.
Seminar starts 5 p.m.

COURSES

ART STUDY SPAIN – July-August. A dynamic 'live-in' art programme for beginners & advanced in converted Olive Mill, fabulous setting. Write: Rutherford, Canillas de Albaida (Malaga), Spain.

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STATEMENT

HUMAN NATURE is not a barrier to progress, present behaviour is changeable. Capitalism produces vicious, competitive behaviour, but in socialism conscious co-operation will predominate. For free literature write: Socialist Party of GB, 52 Clapham High St, London SW4 7UN. Phone 01-622 3811.

Support the Charter for Jobs.

1. We believe that the present level of unemployment is economically wasteful and socially corrosive. The Government can and must stimulate the creation of more jobs.

2. There is useful work crying out to be done. With extra spending we could renovate our cities and improve the health of our people, while lower taxes on jobs would raise private spending power and make us more competitive. To make this possible there has to be some increase in government borrowing. Government borrowing should normally rise in a depression. When there is useful work to be done, it is as sensible for the government to borrow money as for firms or families to do so.

3. The government has a special responsibility for the million and a quarter people who have been unemployed for over a year.

These people should be guaranteed the offer of a job on socially useful projects, such as the Community Programme supports.

We must reduce unemployment. It can be done if our policies are followed. We need the maximum number of people to support our Charter.

Please write to us enclosing a contribution to the campaign and we will send you our detailed argument 'We Can Cut Unemployment'.

We shall be holding meetings throughout the country and forming local groups. These will help in the expansion of the Community Programme by suggesting suitable employment projects in their localities.

We must persuade the Government to act.

Please support the Charter.

Patrons: James Callaghan, Edward Heath, Lord Wilson.

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We can cut unemployment.

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